

THE
RICHES
OF
MERCIE.

In two Treatises;
1 *Lydia's Conversion.*
2. *A Rescue from death.*

By the late learned, and reverend
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1 SAM. 2. 6.

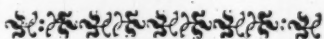
*The Lord killeth, and maketh alive;
hee bringeth downe to the Grave,
and bringeth up.*

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Sibbes, R.



me



LYDIAS

Conversion.

ACT. 16. 14.

And a certaine woman named Lydia, a seller of Purple, of the Citie of Thyatira, that worshipped God, whose heart the Lord opened, that shee attended to the things that were spoken of Paul. And when, &c.



TH E holy Apostle Saint Paul a vessell of mercie, having found mercie himselte of God,
B was

was a fit instrument to preach mercy to others.

Hereupon he was appointed to be a preacher to the *Gentiles*. Among the rest of the *Gentiles*, he was called to preach to them of *Macedonia*, and it was by a vision, as we see in the former part of the Chapter. *A man of Macedonia*, appeared to *Paul* by night and sayd *Come to Macedonia and helpe us*. Indeed the state of the people of *Macedonia* called for help, as now the state of many people doth: though there be not such a vision as a man of *Macedonia*, yet their wretched estate (being under the Kingdome of Sa-

tan)

Verſ. 98

tan)cries *Come and help us,* though they doe not crie with their mouthes, yet their estate cries. The Apostle upon this vision, takes his journey to come toward *Macedonia*, and he stayed there a good while; *Hee abode certaine dayes.*

Though God called him to *Macedonia*: yet God did not giue him great incouragement for the present. This is the manner of Gods carriage, not to discouer at the present what he wil doe, but leads people on by gentle incouragements: and to humble them the more with little fruit at the first, hee abode *there certaine dayes*, without any


E 2 great

great fruit. Afterwards he goes out to *Philippi* (the cheife City in *Macedonia*, and on the Sabbath day, the people were gathered together: a company of women were resorted together, and there he preached to them: As indeed holy communion is never without a blessing; they met together on a good day, the Sabbath, and for a good end they were met together; Now *Paul* tooke the advantage of their meeting together on the Sabbath day, he cast his net, and he catcheth one with her family, namely *Lydia*. The Gospell was a sweete favour of salvation to her. Here-

Hereupon there is a discourse of *Lydia*, a short story of *Lydia*, a story worthy to be thought of, which is in the words of my text.



A certaine woman named Lydia, &c.

 *Hee* is described First by her person, and sex, a certaine woman. By her name *Lydia*. By her calling a *seller of purple*. By her citie *Thiaticra*. By her pious disposition, *shee worshipped God*. And then her conver-

Parts of
the text.

B 3

sion

1 sion is set downe, by the
cause of it. *God opened her
heart.* And what followed
upon that opening of her
heart, *shee attended to the
things that were spoken by
Paul, and likewise shee was
baptised with all her house-
hold.*

And then the sweet fruit
that this conversion of her
with all her household had
presently shee shewed the
loue (that shee felt from
God in converting her) to
the blessed Apostle and his
company, shee besought
them saying, *If yee have
judged mee faithfull to the
Lord, Come to my house,
&c.* which words I shall
vnfold as I come to them.

And



*And a certaine woman
named Lydia, a seller of
purple, &c.*



E I R S T here is a
description of
her person, and
sex, and name,
and calling, and city, and
disposition.

God takes notice of all
the particulars of those
that are his, he delights
to speake of them, those
that haue their names
written in the booke of
life, hee knowes their
names, and callings, and

God takes
particular
notice of
his.

B 4

per-

persons, they are as Jewels in his eye, they are *written on the palmes of his hands*, hee takes more speciall notice of them then of the rest of the world : Therefore the Apostle is very punctuall in the description of all particulars.

For her person I will be very short, I will giue but a note or two, and so come to that I mainly ayme at, her conversion.



A certaine woman named Lydia.

FOR her sex, shee,
and the rest were
women that were gathered
together, as wee see
in the former verse. *In
Christ Iesus there is nei-
ther male nor female.* Sin
came in by a woman, and
the meanes of salvation
was by a woman too,
here were a company of
women gathered to-
gether.

For the most part wo-
men haue sweet affections
to religion, and therein
B 5 they

Womens
affections
to religion
strong.

Sibbes, R.

they oft goe beyond
men.

Reas. 1.

The reason is, Religion is especially seated in the affections: and they haue sweet and strong affections.

2

Likewise they are subject to weakenesse, and God delights to shew his strength in weaknesse.

3

And thirdly, especially Child bearing-women, bring others into this life with danger of their own, therefore they are forced to a nearer communion with God, because so many children as they bring forth, they are in perill of their liues. Therefore the Apostle here mentions

a

a company of women
that were gathered toge-
ther, and among the rest,
*a Certaine woman named
Lydia.*

What! a woman to bee
the foundation of the
Church of *Macedonia*, a
poore woman, and then a
Gaoler afterward, a rug-
ged rough Gaoler: for
these to be the foundati-
on of so famous a Church
as *Philippi* and other
Churches in *Macedonia*!
Oh! yes; the *Kingdome
of heauen* is as a *graine of
mustard seed* small in the
beginning. It is so in re-
gard of the Church it
selte; and in regard of the
grace, that euery particu-
lar

Great
things in
religion
from small
beginnings

lar member hath, it is little and weake beginnings Christians are not as the Angels were, perfect at the first : The Church growes by little, and little. Therefore we should not be discouraged when the plantation of the Gospel hath poore successe at the beginning: We see in the Church of *Macedonia*, there was little successe at the first: A woman and a rough Gaoler, a Gaoler that both by calling, and disposition, and custome was a man, hard and hardned too: yet these two were the foundation of a great Church.

Was it not so among
our

our selues? The Church
of latter times, in the time
of reformation, how be-
gan it? By a child, and a
woman, King *Edward* the
sixt, and *Queene Elizabeth*
of famous memory Ther-
fore as the Prophet sayth,
Who art thou that despisest
the day of little things?
despise not little things.
There is nothing less then
grace at the first: But as
Christ the stocke of *Iesse*,
rose from the dead and
rose up to heaven, and o-
verspreads the world now
so euery Christian riseth
of meane beginnings: and
so doth the Church it
selfe. *A certaine woman*
named Lydia, shee was the
founda-

foundation of a famous Church.

Then shee is set downe by her calling.



A Seller of Purple.

Callings
allowed by
God.

GOD allowes callings.

The calling of Christianity is shewed in particular callings, which are sanctified by *God* to subdue the excessse of corruptions. Men without callings are exceeding vicious, as some Gentlemen, and beggars, in this I may ranke them together

together: those that have no callings, nor fit themselves for a calling, and that are out of a calling lawfull.

Callings are lawfull. And so this calling of commerce, and trade, *A seller of purple*: Though for the most part men gather a great deale of soile, and corruption, by commixture of manners with those they deale with: yet there must be commerce, and this particular commerce of *selling of Purple*.

Commerce lawfull.

The body of man needs many callings, there is not a part of mans body, nor one member, but it sets a particular

particular calling on work
Therefore this life is a
life of many necessities?
and there must be callings
and trading, and this parti-
cular trading, *selling of pur-
ple*. It may seeme super-
fluous, but it is not alto-
gether: for Garments are
for 3. ends.

Vse of gar-
ments.

For { Necessity.
Ornament.
Distinction.

Now purple, howeuer
it be not for necessity, it
is for ornament, and di-
stinction, for Magistrats,
and the like, persons of
great quality. How-ever
the pride of the times hath
bred

bred a confusion, that one will goe as well as another yet *God* that allowes distinction of callings, and persons, allowes distinction of habit, and attire Therefore selling of purple is lawfull and the wearing of rich attire. *Kings daughters* went in such, as it is sayd of *Dauids* daughters.

So there bee not over much delicacie: for delicacie in this, in these times is fatall as there be many in the City, and in the countries that are given to over-much nicitie, and sumptuousnes in this kind; it is a fore runner of ruine.

Otherwise it is lawfull
(for

The selling and wearing rich attire lawfull.

Object,

Sibbes, R.

(forthose that may,) to weare purple, asit is lawfull to sell Purple, so that (as he sayd to the great Emperour) they doe not consider the purple so much, as that the purple couers dust, and base flesh that must turne to dust and ashes, and rottenesse ere long, so that people bee not lift up in that, that is borrowed from the poore creature, from wormes. It is a strange thing that men should be so sicke in their fancie, as to thinke themselves the better for that they beg of the poor creature: so a man take heed of fancie and pride, it is lawfull to use purple, *Shee was*

a seller of Purple, So much
for her calling.



Shee worshipped God.



SHEE was per-
haps a Iew, and
looked for a Mes-
sias. There were
3. sorts of people before
Christ. The Iewes and
those that we call profe-
lites; and Religious per-
sons fearing God. Shee
might be one of the three
it is not certaine what shee
was. Certainly shee was
one that feared God. She
had some religion in her,
though

3. Sorts of
people be-
fore Christ

though yet shee was not ripened in the true Religion, shee was a woman that feared *God*.

From such kind of places as this, we haue occasion to speake of workes of preparation. Saint *Paul* was sent to her, shee was a woman that feared *God*. To speak a little of works of preparation.

Workes of
preparation
on necessa-
ry to con-
version.

It is true, *God* usually prepares those that hee meanes to convert: as we plow before we sow, wee doe not sow among the thornes, and we dig deep to lay a foundation, wee purge before **Cordials**. It is usuall in nature, and in grace preparations: therefore

fore preparations are necessary. There is such a distance between the nature, and corruption of man, and grace, that there must be a great deale of preparation, many degrees to rise by before a man come to that condition hee should bee in, therefore preparations we allow, and the necessity of them.

But we allow this, that all preparations are from *God*, wee cannot prepare our selues, or deserue future things by our preparations; for the preparations themselves are of *God*.

And thirdly, though we grant preparations yet we grant

Preparations are from *God*.

Preparati-
ons re-
mooue hin-
drances.

grant no force of a meritorious cause in preparations to produce such an effect as conversion is: No; only preparation is to remooue the hindrances, and to fit the soule for conversion that there may not be so great a distance betweene the soule, and conversion, as without preparation there would be.

Quest.

But when is preparation sufficient?

Ans.

When the soule is so farre cast downe, as it sets a high price on Christ, and on grace aboue all things in the world, it accounts grace the onely pearle

pearle, and the Gospell to
be the Kingdome of hea-
ven : when a man sets a
high price on grace more
then all the world besides
then a man is sufficiently
prepared,

Some poore soules think
they are neuer prepared e-
nough : but let them looke
to the end that *God* will
haue preparation for that
is, that a high price be set
upon the best things, and
value all things but grace
meanely in their owne
ranke, when a man is
brought to that pitch that
by the light of the spirit,
hee esteemes all nothing
but Christ, and that hee
must be had, and he must
haue

haue sauing grace let him neuer talke whether hee bee prepared or no. This disposition shewes that he is prepared enough, at least to bring him to conversion.

Progresse
of prepara-
tion.

Now, *God* in preparation for the most part Civilizeth people, and then Christianizeth them as I may say : for the spirit of *G o d* will not be effectuall in a rude wild, and barbarous soule, in menthat are not men ; Therefore they must bee brought to Civilitie, and not only to civilitie, but there must be a worke of the law, to cast them downe, and then they are brought

brought to Christianitie
thereupon.

Therefore they take a
good course that labour to
breake them from their
naturall rudenesse, and
feircenesse: as by nature e-
very man is like a *wild asse-
Colt*, there cannot be more
significant words a *Colt*,
an *asse Colt*, and *wild*. Now
ther is no sowing in the sand
or on the water: there is no
forcing of grace on a soule
so farre indisposed that is
not brought to Civilitie,
rude, and barbarous soules
therefore Gods manner is
to bring them in the com-
passe of Civilitie, and then
seeing what their estate is
in the corruption of nature

C

to

to deject them and then to bring them to Christianity as we see here in *Lydia*.

For howeuer there is no force of a meritorious cause in preparations to grace, to raise up the soule to grace: for alas that cannot be! it is not in it, to produce such a blessed effect: yet notwithstanding it brings a man to a lesse distance then other wild creatures that come not within the compasse of the means. Therefore vsually to those that use the talents of their vnderstanding and will, that they haue well, *God* after discovers himselfe more, and more. Therefore let all be encouraged

raged to grow more, and
more to courses of civility,
and Religion, and wait the
good time, till *God* shine
on them in mercy : For
though those courses can
neuer produce religion, yet
it brings men to a proxi-
mity, and nearenesse to
God, and *Christ*, more then
those that stand further off.
But I will not force this
point further at this time-
*Shee was a woman that fea-
red, and worshipped God.*
Shee was faithfull in that
light shee had, and to him
that hath shal be given.

C₂

Shee



Shee worshipped God.



NOT in any sight of her owne, she had the grace of *God* from the spirit of *God*. All feare comes from the spirit of *God*, initiall feare, and ripened feare, all feare is from *God*, but I will not confict with adversaries at this time. You see the person, a woman, her calling; *A seller of purple*, and her pious disposition, shee was such a one as worshipped *God*; And she heard *Paul*.

The

The sweete providence of *God*, brings those that belong to Election, vnder the compasse of the means at one time or other. Let the diuell, and the instruments of the Divell, rage and oppose, and doe what they can; those that belong to *God*, *God* will haue a time to bring them within the compasse of his calling, and effectually call them by his spirit. As here *Lydia*, there was a sweete preventing providence that shee never thought of, *God* brought an Apostle for the saluation of her soule, shee heard *Paul* and was converted. To come to the description

God
brings his
elect un-
der means.

C 3

of

22501

of her conversion in the next words.



*Whose heart the Lord opened
to attend to the things
that were spoken of Paul.*



GOD opened her heart. To what purpose? To attend to the things spoken of Paul.

God by the word preached opens the heart; to attend to the word: by the word, we are fitted to the word. The spirit and the word draw us to themselves: The spirit, and the word

word draw us to regard the word, by the word her heart was opened to attend to the word.

First I will speake of the opening her heart: And then of her attending upon the word preached by *Paul*. *God* opened her heart. Shee was a religious woman yet her heart was shut before *God* opened it. Shee was religious in her kind, yet her heart must be further opened before shee could bee saved. There is no staying in preparations in this or that degree: as many abortiues in our times that make many offers; they haue the spirit of bondage, and are

B 4

cast

Preparations not to be rested in.

Sibbes

22501

cast downe: but there they
stick and neuer come to
prooffe. But those that
will attaine to salvation,
must not rest in religious
dispositions, in good affec-
tions, and gracious offers,
they must goe on further
and further, as wee see
here, *God opened her heart.*

God opens
the heart.

I.
The heart
naturally
shut.

Obferue then in the o-
pening of the heart these
things.

First the heart is natu-
rally shut, and closed up
as indeed it is to spirituall
things: it is open enough
to the world, and to base
contentments here, but it
is shut to heauen and hea-
uenly things, naturally
it

it is cleane locked up.

Partly in its owne nature, being corrupt, and earthly, partly because Satan he beseigeth all the senses, and shuts up all. There is a spirit of deaferesse, and blindnesse, and a spirit of darknes, and deaferesse in people, before *God* hath brought them by the powerfull worke of the Gospell, from the Kingdome of Satan, that possesseth every man naturally. Naturally therefore our hearts are not open, but locked and shut up (that is supposed here) so that except *God* be mercifull to breake the prison as it were, whereby by

C5

unbe-

vnbeleife, and the wicked-
nesse of our nature we are
shutt up, there is no hope
of salvation at all.

God opens the heart.

2.
God a-
lone o-
pens the
heart.

The second thing is this,
that as our hearts are shut
and closed up naturally :
so *God*, and *God* alone o-
pens the heart, by his spi-
rit in the use of the means,
God opened *Lydia's* heart.

God hath many keyes, he
hath the key of heauen, to
cōmand the raine to come
downe, he hath the key of
the wombe, the key of
hell, and the graue, and
the key of the heart, espe-
cially, *He opens, and no
man*

*man shuts, and shuts and
no men opens. He hath the
key of the heart, to open
the vnderstanding, the
memory, the will, and af-
fections. God, and God on-
ly hath the key of the
heart to open that, it is his
prerogatiue. He made the
heart, and he onely hath
to doe with the heart, he
can vnmake it, and make
it new againe, as those that
make locks can doe. And
if the heart be in ill
temper, hee can take it in
peices, and bring it to no-
thing as it were (as it must
be before conuersion)
and he can make it a new
heart againe. It is *God that*
opens the heart, and God
*only**

only. All the Angels in
heaven cannot giue one
grace, nor the least grace;
Grace comes meerly from
God: it is meerly from
God: All the creatures in
the world cannot open
the heart, but *God* only by
his holy spirit: For nature
cannot doe aboue its
sphere (as we say) aboue
its owne power. Naturall
things can doe but naturall
things. For nature to raise
it selfe up to beleue hea-
venly things it cannot be.
Therefore as you see va-
pours goe as high as the
sunne drawes them up and
no higher: so the soule of
man is lift up to heauen-
ly things by the power of
Gods

Gods spirit : God drawes us
and then we follow : *God*
I say onely openeth the
heart.

Because there is not on-
ly want of strength in the
soule, to open it selfe : but
likewise there is enmity,
and poyson in the heart,
so shut it selfe, and shut
out all goodnesse. A man
hath no senses to spirituall
things ; no eyes, no eares,
no tast, no life. Nay there
is an opposition to all. *A*
naturall man perceiveth not
the things of God, neither
can he, he wants senses: and
those senses hee hath are
set against goodnesse, as
the Apostle saith he esteemeth
them foolishnesse. I
need

I.
There is
want of a-
bility in the
soule.

2
There is
an^t opposi-
tion.

need not bee much in so easie an argument, that you are well enough acquainted with. Naturally the heart is shut, and God only must open it.

Use
Patience
to others.

2 Tim. 2.

This should teach us patience, when we can do little good with those that are under us by all our instructions, and corrections wait the due time. Grace is not of thy giving, the heart is not of thy opening, or of any mans opening: therefore as it is 2 Tim. 2. waite, and beare with patience men of contrarie minds, waiting when God in due time giue them grace to repent. Grace is Gods creature it is none of our

our owne. Therefore take heed that we be not short, & angry spirited, if we cannot haue all we would haue of those that are under us, children, or servants, let us waite *Gods* time, he opens the heart in his time.

And if wee find not grace wrought in our owne hearts at the first, or second or third sermon Let us doe as hee at the Poole of *Bethesda*, lie there till the Angell stirre the water, till *God* bee effectuall by his spirit. *God* doth it and he only doth it, only we must waite, he will doe it in his good time, be not ouer short-spirited. This we ought to obserue
out

Thankful-
nesse.

Whatment
by heart.

out of these words *God opened the heart of Lydia.*

The heart is put for the whole soule, he opened her understanding to conceive : for all things begin with heavenly light of the understanding all grace comes into the soule by the understanding.

There is no sanctifying grace in the affections but it comes by enlightning the understanding, we see the grounds of it in the understanding first : *God* opens the understanding, and then he opens the memory to retaine. That the memory may bee as the pot of *Mannah* to hold heavenly things : he opens
and

and strengthens it with retention to keepe them, and he opens the will to close with holy things, and the affections to joy and delight in them. So the heart is the whole inward man, he not only enlightens the understanding, but infuseth grace into the will, and affections, into the whole inward man. We must take it in that extent for else if *God* should only open the understanding, and not through the understanding flow into the will by the power of his spirit, the will would alway rebell: as indeed it is a poysonfull thing; there is nothing so malicious
next

next the diuell, as the will of man. *God* will haue one way, and it will haue another: Therefore *God* doth not only open the vnderstanding to conceiue, but he opens the will to close with, and to imbrace that that is good; or else it will take head, and take armes against the understanding in that that is good, and neuer come to the worke of grace: Therefore take it so, he opened the will and affections as well as the understanding: though what-soeuer is in the will, and affections, comes through the understāding, as well as heate comes through light. *God* opened
ned

ned her heart, to what
end?



*To attend to the things
that were spoken of Paul.*



He word signi-
fies, to applie,
and sether mind
to the things
that *Paul* said, to joyne
and fasten the mind, to
what *Paul* sayd.

First you see then, here
is the opening of the
heart before there is at-
tending, before there can
bee any attending, and ap-
plying

The mind
must bee
sanctified
to attend
to the
word.

plying of the mind, the mind must be sanctified, and strengthened: the soule must be sanctified before it can attend.

The reason is; nothing can flow but from a suitable facultie, and ability to attend is a power and act of the soule, it must come from a sanctified power of the soule, the heart must first be opened, and then the heart attends. *God* sayth, he will circumcise the heart, and then we shall loue him, he sanctifies the heart, and then it loues him. *God* changeth and altereth the frame of the soule, and then holy actions come from

from it. First, grace begins with the abilities and powers of the soule, the heart is opened, and then come holy actions futable. There is no proportion betwene holy actions, and an vn sanctified soule, the heart must first be opened, and then it attends.



Whose heart the Lord opened that shee attended, &c.



YOU see then in the next place, that *God* opening the heart of any Christian, it is to carrie

God opens
the heart
to attend.

carrie the attention to the word. *God* by grace carries the heart to the word, *shee attended to what Paul spake*. Where true grace is wrought it carries not to speculation or to practise this or that idle dreame, but where the heart is open, grace carries to attend to the word, especially to the good word the Gospel of Christ. As grace is wrought by the word: so it carries the soule to the word.

Use.

Triall whether our hearts be opened.

And therefore it may be a use of tryall to know whether wee haue our hearts wrought on by the grace of *God* or no, whether *G o d* by his spirit haue

haue opened our hearts or
not if our hearts be carri-
ed to the blessed word of
God to relish that. If they
be, God hath opened our
hearts to attend to the
word. And there is no
better evidence of a child
of God, then that that is
fetched from the affection
that hee carries to the word
and blessed truth of God :
Oh ! he relisheth it as his
appointed food, he cannot
be without it, take away
that, and you take away his
life. *My Sheepe heare my
voyce*, you are none of
mine because you heare not
my word. A delight in the
blessed truth of God is an
argument that God hath
first

first opened the heart.

Therefore poore soules
whenthey want good evi-
dence, when they doubt
whether their estate be
good or no? Let them con-
sider what rellish they have
of diuine truths. Whether
it be connaturall to the
word or no? whether it be
favourie or no? whether
they could be without the
meanes of salvation or no?
and let them judge of
themselves by their de-
light in Gods truth, her
heart was opened to attend
to the word.

Shce



Shee attended to the things which were spoken of Paul.

WHich were the blessed truths of salvation. The forgiuenesse of sinnes, The free mercy of God in Christ. The particulars are not set downe, but it was the Gospell, and shee belecued upon it, therefore it must needes be the word of faith: We see heere then, that

D

The

The Gos-
pell the
Ground of
faith;

*The seed and ground of
faith is the Gospell.*

Her heart was opened to attend to that, that *Paul* spake which was the Gospell. And indeed so it is. The foundation of faith, the word of faith is the Gospell: nothing can breed faith but the word of *God*: for how can wee hope for heauen, and happinesse, but by the mind of *God* discovered? Can we looke for any thing but *God* must discover his mind to bestow it: and where haue wee the mind and bosome of *God* opened to us, is it not from the

the scriptures the word of God, from the good word especially? It is called the word of grace, and the word of the Kingdome, and of glory; The word of life: because by it all these blessed things are conveyed to us.

Now it is not the word simply here, but the word *spoken by Paul*, that is, the word preached by an authorized minister, is the usuall meanes of faith, her heart was opened to attend to what was spoken by *Paul* an authorized minister, so the word preached is the ordinary though not the sole foundation of faith. Therefore

The word preached the usuall meanes of faith.

Rom. 10.

the Apostle saith, that God by that converted the world, *by the foolishnesse of preaching*, And in the ladder of heauen in *Rom. 10.* *How shall they call on him of whom they haue not heard and how shall they preach except they bee sent :* so there is no faith without teaching. The point is playne, you heare it oft : The word is the ground of faith, and the word especially as it is preached by a *Paul*, by a Minister unfolding it.

Use.
To pray
for labour-
ers in
Gods har-
vest.

Therefore be stirred up as yee fauour the soules of *Gods people*, to pray to God *to send labourers into his harvest*, and to pray that the

the Gospell and the preaching of it may haue a free passage, that *God* would set vp lights in all the darke corners of the kingdome, and every where to *those that are in darkenesse, and in the shadow of death*. And blessed are their indeauour that labour, that the Gospell may be preached in euery part of the Kingdom. For we see here, it is the word unfolded, the unsearchable riches of Christ spread open, the Tapestry laid open, that usually beget faith. The mine must be digged: people must see it familiarly layd open.

Therefore saith he here, *Lydia's heart was opened,*

D 3

and

To prize
the ordi-
nance of
preaching.

and shee attended to the
word spoken by Paul.

Let this teach us to set
a price upon the ordinance
of *God*: doth *God* set up an
ordinance; and will he not
giue vertue, and power to
it? Yes: there is a maje-
sty, and a power in the
word of *God* to pul peo-
ple out of the Kingdome
of Sathan, to the blessed
light of *Gods* Kingdome.
It was the word, and the
word opened by the mini-
stery of Paul.

Attention
necessarie.

But it was the word,
and the word opened, and
attended to, shee mixed it
with her attention and her
heart closed with it. There
are these 3. goe together.

The

The word, and the word preached, and then attending to the word preached at was the ground of her faith, these 3. meeting together.

There are these foure things must alwayes be in the senses of our body. If wee will see there must be an object to see, we must see something; and a facultie to see, our eye; and then a light whereby wee see we cannot see in the dark And then there must bee an application of the eye to see the object by that light. So in spirituall things there is the blessed truth of God, the mercie of God in Iesus Christ: that wee

D 4

may

4.
Things requisite to
light.

may see these things, wee must haue a light by which we may see them. And there must be a power to see which is the sanctified opened understanding, when the understanding is opened, then there is an application of the soule to attend to the word of *God*, by the light of the word. So that there must be application, and attention to the word: before the word can doe us good, it must be applyed to the object, the tast to the thing tasted, and so in all the other senses.

Attention is a speciall thing: how many sermons are lost in this Citie, that
are

are as seed drowned, that never come to fruite? I thinke there is no place in the world where there is so much preaching, and no place, where there are so many sermons lost; why; because people want a retaining power, and facultie to attend, and retaine and keepe what wee heare shee attended to the word preached.

To giue a little direction in this poynt of attending, and applying the mind, not to speake much I will name two or three principall things that I thinke fit at this time.

If we would come, as we should, to the word
D 55 preached.

Directions
to attend
on the
word.

1.
Search our
wants.

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preached: let us search our wants before wee come, and all the occasions wee shall have to encounter with, all temptations, that we are like to encounter with, let us fore-cast by presenting to our soules. I am weake in knowledge, and I want such graces. I am like to encounter with such temptations, I am too weake for it; I shall meete with such adversaries, I know not how to answer them, I am plunged in such busineses, I shall be lost in them without grace: then the soule comes with a mind to be supplied, and then it will attend, and will pray for the

the preacher! Oh Lord direct him that he may speak fitly to me, somewhat for my understanding, somewhat for my affections, somewhat to helpe me against such, & such a temptation: this is wanting, and therefore we profit no more by the word then we doe.

Then when we come to heare the word, let us heare it with all spirituall subjection, as that Word that hath power to Command the conscience. This is the word of God: the Minister of God speaks in the place of God to me. I must give an account of it. I will subject my conscience to it: It is spoken with evidence,

²
Come with
subjection.

evidence, and proved, I will stoupe to it. Thus we should come with subjection of soule and conscience to whatsoever is taught; and not come to judge, and censure, or to delight in it as musique, as if wee came to a play, to heare some prettie sentences: but come to heare God, as to the ordinance of God, come as to that Word that shall judge our soules at the latter day; that is the way to attend.

³
To get the
word in-
grafted.

Then againe, if we would attend, when we have heard the word of God, let us labour by all meanes to bring it neare to us; that it may be an *ingrafted*

ted Word, that the soule
may be leavened by it,
that it may be so ingraf-
ted in the understanding,
and affections that we may
thinke the better, in the
vertue of it; and love, and
speake, and doe the better
as a Sience favours of the
plant it is put into. Let
us labour that the word
of God may be written
in our soules in the tables
of our hearts: that the
truth of God may be
neare us, as any tempta-
tion shall be neare us, or
any corruption neare us.
What is the reason wee
yeeld to corruptions and
temptations? They are
neare, and the Word is
farre

J) farre off, We never attended to the Word to bring it neare home. If the word were as neare as corruptions, and temptations, that it were ingrafted, and invested into the soule, we should have the word ready for every temptation: there should not be a temptation offered, nor a corruption arise, but wee should subdue it, and beat it downe with the blessed truth of God, accompanied with the spirit. Let us labour to get it neare us; that the reasons of the word and our reason, that the judgment of God, and our iudgement, that the wil of God, & our own wil may

may be all one: and so to have it incorporated, and naturalized into our hearts, that we may speake and thinke, and doe nothing but that which is Divine: that is, to have the word written in our hearts, our attention should be to that end. Therefore when we heare, we should doe as nature doth with the meate we eate, it suckes out a strength futable for every part, every part hath a power to draw out nourishment what is futable to it selfe: so when wee heare the word of God, we should be able to say this is good for such, and such

such an end, and never leave thinking of the word of God when wee have heard it, till we have turned the word into our soules, till we have it fixed in our understandings, that we can say, Now I know it; till we have subdued our hearts to it, and we be molded, and delivered up to it, that we can say, Now I have it; now the word is mine. Let us never leave the truth wee heare till we be brought to that : alas to what purpose is it to heare except we make it our owne, as nature makes the meate our owne that wee eate ! There is a second or third digestion,

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digestion, that goes before digestion be perfectly made, and the meate turned into it. It is ruminating, and meditating, and altering of that wee heare, and working on it that makes spirituall nourishment: thus wee should doe to attend to purpose.

And that we may doe it let us adde some meditations to these practises. Consider first of all whose word it is. It is the word of the great God, and the word of God for my good. It is the good word of God, and the word of God that brings me much good, eternall salvation if I obey it, it is the word of God

4.
Meditation.

God that brings eternall
damnation if I obey it not.

It is the word of the
great King, a Proclama-
tion, a Law whereby I
shall be judged, and per-
haps that word that I
shall not heare another
time, perhaps the spirit
may worke more now
then at another time: there-
fore I will be wise, & give
way to the spirit of God,
and not beate it backe, per-
haps I shal never have such
a gale of the spirit offered
again, it may be the last
Sermon I shall heare while
I live: we should have such
meditatiōs, we that speak,
as if it were the last time
we should speake; and you
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that heare, as if they should be the last things that ever you should heare : for how doe wee know but it may be so ? It is another manner of matter to heare, then we take it. *Take heed how yee heare saith our blessed Saviour :* We heare nothing but it sets us forward in the way of Grace to heaven, or forward to hell, we are helped by it to heaven, or else hardened by it further to hell. We had need to take heed how we heare, we must be judged by that wee heare: and that that wee heare now negligently, and carelessly, God will make good at the day of judgement.

judgement. We may shake off (as prophane spirits doe) the Ministers exhortations: but will you shake off *depart ye Cursed* at the latter day? Will you shake off that sentence, you would not heare me, and I will not heare you? Oh! no: Therefore shake not that off now, that will be made good then. If thou entertaine the Gospell now, God will make it good then; if thou receive mercie now, he will shew that thou art acquitted then before Divels, and Angells, and Men. Let us regard this, and let it make us heare the word with attention as this good woman

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woman here. God opened her heart, and shee attended to the things that were spoken of *Paul*.

But you will aske, how shall I know a man whose heart is opened, and attends better then another man doth?

I will give two or three briefe rules of discerning. He that by the spirit of God attends to the good word of God to purpose, with an opened understanding, he not only knowes the words, and the shell in preaching the word of God, but the things: he knowes not only what faith

Quest.

How to know we attend aright.

Ans.

I.

When wee know not the word, but the things.

faith and repentance is in the words: but he hath a spirituall light to know what the things are, what repentance is, and faith, and love, and hope, and patience, hee knowes the things. And likewise he that hath attended to purpose he can do the things: he not only knowes what he should doe: but by the grace of the spirit, and attending upon the word of God, he knowes how to doe them. Grace teacheth him not onely that hee should denie himselfe, and *live soberly, and righteously, and Godly*, but it teacheth him how to live soberly and righteously, and Godly.

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Godly. Grace, when we attend upon the word as wee should, teacheth us to doe the things; not only that we should repent, and pray &c. but to doe them it opens the things, and gives abilitie to doe them.

And in the next place, those that attend as they should doe, there is a spirituall eccho in their soules to every thing that is taught: that is, when they are exhorted to beleeve, they answer, Lord I will beleeve; Lord I will heare, I will repent, and I will take heed of such sins by thy grace; when God saith *seeke my face; Lord thy face will I seeke.* This is the

2.
The soule
ecchoes to
the word.

the answer of a good conscience, this eccho, where there is attention to the word of God by the spirit, there is an eccho to that the spirit speaks, Lord it is good, and it is good for me, if I yeeld to this, if I doe not, it is naught for me to put off repentance till another day; I desire to yeeld now, and oh ! that my heart were directed; if it be rebellious, and not yeelding, there is a desire that the heart may be brought into subjection to every truth revealed, there is a gracious eccho in them that attend to purpose.

Then againe those that
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doe attend from a sanctifying grace, they see things by another light, by a spirit of their owne, by a heavenly light, by a *species* in their owne kind, spirituall things with a spirituall light. Many come, and heare sermons, and can discourse, and wrangle, and maintaine janglings of their owne, and all this out of naturall parts, and out of pride of heart : but a gracious holy man, sees spirituall things by a spirituall light, in their owne kind.

A man that is borne in a dungeon, and neuer saw the light, when he heares discourse of the Sun, and

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starres

3.
They see things in their owne light.

stars, and earth, and flowers, and plants, he hath Imaginations what they should be, but he fancies other things : so a man that neuer had spirituall eye-sight, to see spirituall things in their kinde ; he fancies them to bee this and that, but he seesthem not by their owne light, many speake and talke of good things, but it is by the spirit of other men, out of books, and hearing and not by a spirit of their owne. He that attends by grace speakes out of a spirit of his owne, and not out of other mens spirits, he sees spirituall things in their owne colours. Thus
wee

wee see how to discerne
spirituall attention.

And he that knowes what
this meanes, what is it to
haue his heart opened to
attend, when he goes from
hearing the word, he judg
eth of his profiting by it
not by what he can say by
heart; but by how much
the meeker hee is, how
much more patient, how
much more able to beare
the crosse, to resist temp-
tations, and to haue com-
munion with *God*, so hee
values his attending upon
the meanes and hearing the
word by the growth of
his grace, and the decay of
his corruptions. *Shee at-*
tended to the things that

They judge
according
to their
profit.

E 2

were

were spoken of Paul.



*And shee was baptized,
and her household.*

Baptisme
the seale of
salvation.



SHEE had the
meanes of sal-
vation, and shee
had the seale
likewise, which is bap-
tisme. We haue all need of
seales, wee haue need to
hane our faith str ngth-
ened: *God* knowes it bet-
then wee our selues, We
thinke Baptisme, and the
Communion small matters
but *God* knowes how
prone wee are to stagger,
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hee knowes that all seales are little enough; therefore it is sayd here, *shee was baptized, and all her household.* Baptisme is a solemne thing, it is the seale of the Covenant of grace: you are well enough acquainted, I imagine, with the thing, therefore I will not enter into the common place, it is needlesse. As the whole trinitie was at the Baptisme of *Christ*, so euery infant that is baptized, is the Child of *Christ*. And it is a speciall thing that we should meditate of.

We slight our baptisme and thinke it needlesse
you see the holy woman
E3. here

How to
thinke of
our Bap-
tisme.

here would bee baptized presently; shee would haue the seale of the covenant. There are many that are not booke-learned, that cannot read, at least they haue no leasure to read; I would they would read their booke in their Baptisme: and if they would consider what it ministers to them upon all occasions they would be farre better Christians then they are.

Thinke of thy Baptisme when thou goest to *God*, especially when hee seemes angrie, it is the seale of the covenant; bring the promise, Lord it is the seale of thy Covenant,
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thou hast prevented mee
by thy grace, thou brough
test mee into the Cove
nant before I knew my
right hand from my left.
So when we goe to Church
to offer our seruice to *God*,
thinke, by baptisme wee
were consecrated, and de
dicated to *God*, we not on
ly receiue grace from *God*
but we giue our selues to
God. Therefore it is sacril
ledge for persons bapti
zed to yeeld to temptati
ons to sinne, we are dedi
cated to *God* in baptisme.
When we are tempted to
despaire, let us thinke of
our baptisme: wee are in
the Covenant of Grace,
and haue receiued the
E 4 seale

seale of the Covenant, baptisme. The diuell is an vncircumcised, damned, cursed spirit, hee is out of the Covenant: but I am in the Covenant: Christ is mine, the holy Ghost is mine, and God is mine, therefore let us stand against all the temptations of that vncircumcised, vn baptized damned spirit. The thinking of our baptisme thus, will help us *to resist the Devill*, he is a coward, if hee bee resisted he will flee: and what will better resist him then the Covenant of grace, and the seale of it? When we are tempted to sinne, let us thinke, what haue

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haue I to doe with sinne?
by baptisme I haue uni-
on with the death of
Christ; he died to take a-
way sin, and my end must
be his. I must abolish sin
in my nature? Shall I yeild
to that that in baptisme I
haue sworne against? And
then if we bee tempted to
despaire for sin, let us call
to mind the promises of
grace, and forgiuenesse of
sins, and the seale of for-
giuenesse of finnes, which
is baptisme: For as water
in baptisme washeth the
body, so the blood of
Christ washeth the soule:
Let us make that use of
our baptisme in temptati-
ons not to despaire for sin.

Es

And

And in conversing among men; let us labor to maintaine the vnitie of the spirit *in the bond of peace*, to live peaceably. Christians must not fall to jarre, why? *There is one faith, and one Baptisme,* have we not all one father? one inheritance, one baptisme, one Religion, and shall wee breake one with another for trifles, they forget their Baptisme that are so in quarrells. Thus if wee would thinke of it, it is such a booke as would be ready at hand for all services.

And then for our children. those that God hath committed

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committed to us, let us make use of baptisme, do they die in their infancie? make this use of it, I have assured hope that my child is gone to God, he was borne in the Covenant, and had the seale of the Covenant, baptisme, why should I doubt of the salvation of my child? If they live to yeares of discretion, then be of good comfort, he is Gods Child more then mine, I have dedicate him to God, and to Christ, he was baptized in the name of Christ, Christ will care for him as well, as for me. If I leave my Children behind me they are

are Gods, and Christs children, they have received, the seale of the Covenant; baptisme, Christ will provide for them: and he that provides heaven for them, will provide all things in the way to heaven necessarie. God hath said, *I will be the God of thee, and of thy children*, they are in Covenant, thine they were Lord. A man may commit his Children to God on his death-bed; thou gavest them me, and I commit them to thee againe, as before I did by baptisme. All this wee have by thinking of our baptisme. If we looke
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spirits doe not) then the
water, and the elements,
we can have no comfort
by these things: but wee
should consider Gods
blessed institution, and
ordinance, to strengthen
our faith. And to our
children when they come
to yeares, baptisme is an
obligation to beleeve; be-
cause they have received
the seale before hand, and
it is a meanes to beleeve.
Shee was Baptized

And



And her household.

Honour of
good go-
vernours of
families.

SO good is God where the go-
vernour of the familie is good, he gives all the familie good: because he makes conscience in governing, and instructing them; God crownes their indeavours with successe that they shall be all good. As we see *Abraham*, and his household; the Gaoler, and his household, *Zachens*, and his household. Oh! it is a blessed thing to be a good

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good governour in a familie; he brings a blessing upon his house: the Church of God is in his house. There cannot be a more honorable title to any house, then to say it is the Church of God: that the Governour of the familie brings all in subjection to God; that as he will have all serve him, so he will have all serve God; that he will not have a servant but he shall be the servant of God, nor a child but he shall be the child of God; and he labours to make his wife the Spouse of Christ. Thus it should be said of every Christian familie, and then

then they are Churches.

Alas ! in many places now they are hells because there is little regard had of instructing of them. Beloved, many poore soules have had occasion to blesse God for ever, that they haue bin grafted into such good families. And put case sometimes, thou hast instructed them, and taken paines and there is no good done. When thou art dead ; & twenty yeares after, it may come to their minds, all those instructions, when they are in worse families. Oh ! in such a place, with such a Master I had such instructions,

Good instructions
may be effectually
long after.

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tized,

ons, but I had no grace to
take good by them: but
now I call them to mind:
so the seed that was sown
long before may take ef-
fect then. This should
incourage those that are
Governours of families to
be good. *Lydia was bap-
tized, and her household.*

And



And she besought them saying, if you have iudged me faithfull to the Lord come to my house and abide there.

Here is the fruit of Lydia's conversion, when shee was converted, and baptized, shee intreated the Apostles to come to her house, and abide there, and shee prevailed, shee constrained them by a morrall kind of violence they suffered themselves to be overcome.

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house.



*If you have judged mee
faithfull &c. Come to my
house and abide there.*

Here is her invitation;
and the argument
that she forceth it by. *If
you have judged me faithfull
to Christ, then come to my
house.*

To speake a little of her
argument, whereby shee
forced the blessed Apo-
stle, and the rest to her
house.

If



*If yee have judged me
faithfull.*

IT is a most binding argument. If you judge me faithfull, you must judge me a child of God, an heire of heaven, the Spouse of Christ, you must judge mee all these, and the like. *If you have judged mee faithfull come to my house.* And if you judge me so, can you denie me this courtesie. It is a conjuring, wondrous forcible argument. *If you have*

*have
full.*

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have judged mee faithfull.

It implies that *S. Paul*, and holy men would be more strange else. And so there should not be intimate familiaritie (converse there may be, but not familiaritie) with those that are not faithfull. Indifferent carriage to all alike shewes a rotten heart: those that make no difference betweene good Christians and formall hypocrites, No; but if you have judged me faithfull *come to my house*. As if she had said, I know your spirits are such, that except you judge me faithfull, you will not take

Christians
easie to be
intreated,

take this courtesie at my hands.

Againe she supposed if *Paul* judged her faithfull he would not denie her that courtesie. Those that upon good grounds wee judge faithfull, we should be gentle to them, and easie to be intreated. *The wisdome that is from above is so.* Grace Sweetnes the Carriage, and alters a mans disposition. Those that have felt pittie from God, are mercifull to others. *Therefore if you have judged mee faithfull, &c.*

It was an argument of a great-deale of sinceritie, to appeale to their know-
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ledge and judgement, *If you have judged me faithfull.*

If she had not beene sincere she would not have done so : but sinceritie makes a man bold to appeale to God himselfe. *Lord thou knowest that I love thee* saith S. Peter, and *If there be any iniquitie in my heart* saith David, they dare appeale to God and to Gods people, *if yee have judged me faithfull.*

In this speech likewise she desires to have confirmation of her estate from the Apostles. And indeed it is a great confirmation of weake Christians to have the judgement

Approbation of strong Christians confirms the weake.

ment of strong Christians that they are good, *If you have judged mee faithfull*, doe me this courtesie. And would it not comfort her soule to have the judgement of so strong a man as *Paul*?

It is a great strengthening not onely to have the spirit of God witnessse for us, but the spirit of God in others. And sometimes in temptations, the judgment of others will doe us more good then our owne, in a darke state: Therefore wee should appeale to those that feare God to judge us faithfull; though we be in a mist, and in darkenesse

darkenesse sometimes :
that we are not able to
judge of our owne con-
dition.

And indeed when we
judge the people to be
truly good, and true heart-
ed to God, we owe them
this dutie? to thinke
them good people, and
to shew it, it is a debt : we
wrong good persons,
when wee take wrong
conceits of them. Shall
wee not affect and loue
them that *God* loues? It is
as if shee had sayd, *God*
hath taken me into his fa-
mily, and will admit mee
to heauen, and will not
you come to my house?
when *Christ* shall take

F

men

To judge
well of
Christians.

men to be members of his body, shall not we take them into our company. It is a wrong to good people to be strange to them: sometimes there may by way of censure, in some sin, be a little strangeness: but ordinary strangeness becomes not Christians, it becomes not that sweet bond the *Communion of Saints*. If you have judged me faithfull. That is the bond. Her invitation is,

Come

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shee
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*Come to my house, and
and abide there.*



YOU see many
sweet graces pre-
sently after shee
beleived, here is
a loving heart? Why did
shee desire them to come
to her house? To ex-
pressetheloue she did beare
to them for their works
sake, shee felt the loue of
Christ by their ministry
and now she desired to ex-
pressethe fruit of her loue
in maintaining them.

And not onely so but
F 2 shee

*Lydias in-
vitation.*

*To shew
her loue.*

To be further instructed.

shee desired to be edified by them: shee was young-ly planted, and shee desired to bee watered from them. Shee knew *Paul* would drop heavenly things, and giue her that that might stablish her, therefore she desired that they would stay at her house, that she might haue benefit by their heavenly discourse, and be built vp, and edified further, and further.

So you see these two graces especially upon beleeuing, a bountifull louing heart, shee intreated them not onely to come to her house, but to abide there a good while, as they

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they did. And here was
her desire to bee edified.
And a boldnesse to ap-
peare to owne Christ, and
his ministers in dangerous
times: for in those times it
was a dangerous thing to
appeare to be a Christian;
they were worse hated
then the Iewes were,
though both were hated:
yet Christians were, a-
boue all: Therefore false
Christians would be cir-
cumcised, they would be
Iewes, to auoid the Crosse
that they might not bee
accounted Christians.

Faith fruit.
full.

You see in Generall,
true faith that works loue
and workes by loue: It
workes loue in the heart,

and by loue it works all duties of hospitallity, and bounty by loue. When it hath wrought that holy affection, it works by that holy affection ? You see here it is neuer without fruit, presently faith brings forth fruit, as soone as shee was baptized. shee shewes her loue, to the Apostles, and their company, and her bounty and her boldnesse in the cause of Christ.

We say of a graft, it is grafted to purpose, if it take, and bring forth fruit, so shee being a new sience graft into Christ, shee tooke presently as soone as she was baptized

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zed into Christ, here is the fruite of loue and bounty, and boldnesse in the cause of Christ. *Zachews* as soone as euer he beleeved, *halfe my goods I giue to the poore.* So wee see the Gaoler afterwards presently upon beleeving, he entertained the Apostles with a feast and washed their wounds.

Take heed of a barren dead faith, it is a false faith if thou belecue indeed faith will worke loue, and worke by loue, as it did in this blessed woman, her faith knit her to *Christ* in heauen, her loue was as the branches of the tree, her faith knit her to the

roote: but loue as the branches reached to others, her branches reached fruit to the Apostle and his company. So it is the nature of faith that knits us to Christ, the same spirit of loue knits us to others, and reacheth forth fruit to all wee converse with.

Triall of
faith by
love

To Christ.

As wee desire to haue evidence of the soundnes of our faith, let us see what spirit of loue we haue, especially loue to these three things, loue to Christ to whom wee are ingrafted, and loue to the ministers of Christ. We cannot shew kindnesse to Christ, he is in heauen: but

but his ministers, and his poore are upon the earth when wee can buy ointment to poure on Christs feete his poore members, and his Ministers ; and loue to the word of God, they are the three issues of a gracious beleeuing heart, and where they are not, there is no faith at all.

I beseech you let us imitate this blessed woman. You see here the name of *Lydia*, is precious in the Church : the name of *Lydia*, (as it is sayd of *Iosiah*) it is as a boxe of oyntment powred out : the name of *Lydia* cannot bee named in the

F 5 Church

2.
To his
members.

3.
To his
Word.

Church, but there is a sweete saueur with it. As soone as shee beleeued; the Holy Ghost, the spirit of G O D blowing upon the garden of her heart, where the spice of Grace was sowed, stirred vp a sweete sent of faith and of bountie and liberalitie in the cause of Christ.

Let not this bee in vaine to us : but euery one of us labour to bee like *Lydia* : you see what loadestone drew P A V L heere to goe unto her house : shee had Faith, and shee expressed it in loue.

Let us labour to haue
faith

faith, and to expresse it
in loue to G O D vnto
C H R I S T, to his peo-
ple, and word, and or-
dinances that haue his
stampe on them, and let
us boldly ownethe cause
of C H R I S T: let us not
regard the censures of
vaine men that say thus
and thus. Faith and loue
forget danger, it is bold.
Shee forgot all the dan-
ger that shee was in by
countenancing *Paul* and
such men.

Let us labour for faith
and loue and wee shall
not say this and that.

*There is a Lion in the
way*, but wee shall goe
on boldly vntill wee doe
re-

receiue the end of our
faith and loue, the
saluation of our
soules.

*
* *

FINIS.



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Pray
on



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2.20

FINIS.

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A Rescue from
DEATH, with a
Returne of Praise.

PSAL. 107. 17. &c.

*Foolles because of their
 transgressions, and because
 of their iniquities are af-
 flicted, &c.*



His *Psalme* con-
 taineth some
 passages con-
 cerning Gods
 particular sweete *Provi-*
dence, not onely to the
 B Church

The scope
 of the
Psalme.

Church, but to other men: for *Hee* that created all things even the meanest creature, must haue a *providence* over all things, his *providence* must extend it selfe as large as his creation: for what is *providence* but a continuance of creation, a *preservation of those things in being that God hath given to have a being.* The *Prophet* here of purpose opposeth the profane conceits of them, that thinke *God* sits in heaven, and lets things goe on earth as if he cared not for them, it was the fault of the best *Philosophers* to ascribe too much to second causes. The *Psalmist* here shewes

shewes that *God* hath a most particular *providence* in every thing. First hee sets it downe in generall, and then hee brancheth it out into particulars, especially foure, wherein hee specifieth *Gods providence*.

•
4 Instances
of Gods
providence.

The first instance is of those that *wander in the wilderness hungrie and thirstie*, vers. 4. *They cry and God regards them.*

vers. 4.

The second is in verse 10. *They that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in iron, They cry and the Lord heareth them.*

vers. 10.

The third is in the words of the text, *Fooles for their*

vers. 17.

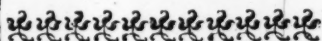
transgressions are afflicted, their soule abhorreth all manner of meate, he instanteth in sicknesse the most ordinary affliction, and shewes that God hath a most particular providence even in that.

Verse 23

The fourth is in vers. 23 Those that goe downe into the Sea, they see experiments of Gods particular providence.

Since the fall, the life of man is subject to a wondrous many inconveniences, which wee have brought on us by our sins, now in this varietie it is a comfortable thing to know Gods care of us in our wandrings, and imprisonments,

ments, in our sicknesse &c.
But to omit the other 3.
and to come to that, that is
proper to the place, that
is, the instance of Gods pro-
vidence in sicknesse.



*Fooles because of their
transgressions, and because
of their iniquities are af-
flicted, &c.*

In these words you have;

First the cause of this visi-
tation, and of all the
greivance he speaks of,
*Transgression, and ini-
quitie.*

Division of
the text.

B 3

And

And then the kind of this visitation, *sicknesse.*

And the extremitie in two branches; *Their soule abhorreth all manner of meate*, and secondly, *They draw neere to the gates of death.*

And then the carriage of the affected and sicke parties, *They cry unto the Lord in their distresse.*

And the remedie of the vniuersall and great Physician, *He saves them out of their distresse.*

And the manner of this remedie, *Hee sent his word and healed them*, his operative, and commanding word, so as it workes with his command. Lastly,

Lastly, the fee that this high Commander askes for, all the tribute or reward that he expects, is *Praise*, and *Thanksgiving*. Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodnesse, and his wondrous workes for the children of men, &c.

So you see this Scripture conteines severall passages betweene God, and man, in *misery*, and in *deliverance*. In *misery*, God afflicts man for his sinne, the passage of man to God is, *hee cries to God*, Gods passage backe againe, is his *deliverance*: and then his returne backe againe

B 4 must

must bee *Thanksgiving*.
 So here is a double visitation, in justice, *God* correcting sinne, and then a visitation in mercie upon their crying and praying, *God* restores them ; and then mans dutie, *Thanksgiving* : But to proceed in order.



Fooles because of their transgressions, &c.

HERE you have first the qualitie of the persons set downe.

Fooles.

Wee must understand by *fooles*, wicked *fooles*,
 not

not such *fooles* as are to be begged as we say, that are defective in their naturals; but the wise *fooles* of the world, they are the cheife of *fooles*, how ever in the Courts of men they be not found *fooles*, yet they are *fooles* in Gods esteeme, who is *Wisedome it selfe*, those that thinke themselves wise, that are conceitedly wise, they are these *fooles* here.

Who ment
by *fooles*.

In the phrase of Scripture, and the language of the *Holy Ghost*, every sinner is a *foole*. It were a disgracefull terme if any man should give it, but let no man stumble at it, it comes from the wise *God*,

B 5

that

Sibbes, R.

that knowes what wisdom is, and what is folly. If a *foole* shall call a man *foole*, hee doth not regard it, but if a wiseman, especially the *God of wisdom* call a man *foole*, hee hath reason to regard it, who can judge better of wisdom then *God*, who is *onely wise*?

Why wicked men
are termed
fooles.

*Why are wicked men
fooles, and Gods children,
so farre as they yeeld to their
lusts?*

In diuers respects.

1.
For lacke of
discerning.

First, For lacke of discerning in all the carriage, and passages of their lives.

You

You know a *foole* is such a one as cannot discern the difference of things, that is defective in his judgement ; discerning, and judgement, that especially tries a *foole* : when he cannot discern betweene pearles and pebbles between Jewels, and ordinary base things, so wicked men are defective in their judgments they cannot discern aright betweene spirituall and heavenly things, and other things, all your worldly fooles he hunts after and placeth his happinesse in things meaner then himselfe, hee takes shadowes for substances.

A

² 1
For passion

A foole is led with his humour, and his lust even as the beast, so there is no wicked man that shakes of the feare of God, (*which is true wisdom,*) but hee is led with his humour, and passion, and affection to some earthly thing. Now a man can never bee wise, and passionate unlesse in one case, when the good is so exceeding that no passion can be answerable as in zeale, in divine matters, that will excuse all exorbitant carriage otherwise. When *David danced before the Arke*, a man would thinke it had beene a foolish matter except it had been in a divine businesse

nesse, when the matter is wondrous great that it deserves any pitch of affection then a man may be eager, and wise: but for the things of this life, for a man to disquiet himselfe and others, to hunt after a *vaine shadow*, (as the *Psalmist* saith) after riches and honour; and to neglect the mayne end of a mans life, it is extreame folly a man that is passionate in this respect cannot be wise, all fooles are passionate, and wicked men have their affections set deeply on somewhat else besides *God*. Because passion presents things in a false glasse, as when

Passion presents things
falsely.

when a man sees the sunne through a cloud he seems bigger, when men looke not on things in the iudgment of the scripture, and the spirit of God, and right reason, but through affection, things appeare to them otherwise then they are and themselves afterwards see themselves *foles*: Take a worldling on his death bed, or in hell, hee sees himselfe a *foole* then, when his drunkenesse is past, when hee is come to himselfe, and is sober, he sees that he hath carched all his lifetime after shadowes, wicked men that are carried with their lusts to earthly things, they

they cannot be wise, therefore the *rich man in the Gospell*, is called a *foole*, and in *Ier. 17.* hee speaks of a man that *labors all his life time, and in the end is a foole*; Is not he a *foole* that will carrie a burthen, and load himselfe in his journey more then hee needs, and is not hee a spirituall *foole*, that *loads himselfe with thick clay* (as the Prophet calls it) and makes his pilgrimage more cumbersome then hee needs? Is not hee a *foole* that layes the heaviest weight on the weakest: that puts off the heaviest burthen of repentance, to the time of sickness,

nesse, and trouble, and death, when all his troubles meete in a center as it were, and hee hath enough to doe to conflict with his sicknes.

3.
Iesting
with sinne.

Againe, hee is a *foole* that will play with edge-tooles, that makes a sport of sinne, hee is a *foole* that provokes his betters, that shootes up arrowes, and casts up stones, that shall fall on his owne head, hee that darts out oathes, and blasphemies against God, that shall returne backe upon his owne pate, many such *fooles* there are, *God will not hold them guiltlesse.*

He is a *foole* that knowes
not,

nor, or forgets his end,
every wicked man forgets
the end wherfore he liues
in the world, hee comes
hereinto the world, and
liues, and is turned out of
the world againe, and ne-
ver considers the worke
that he hath to doe here,
but is carried like a *foole*,
with affections, and pas-
sions to earthly things, as
if hee had been borne on-
ly for them. **A** wiseman
hath an end prefixed in
all that hee doth, and hee
workes to that end. Now
there is no man, but a
sound sanctified Christian
that hath a right end, and
that works to that end, o-
ther men pretend they
haue

4.
Forgetful-
nesse of his
end.

haue an end, and they would serue *God*, &c.

They pretend heaven, but they worke to the earth-ward, like moles, they digge in the earth, they work not to the end they pretend to fixe to themselves: All men how wittie soeuer they are otherwise in worldly respects, they are but *fooles*.

As we say of owles, they can see, but it is by night so wicked men are wittie but it is in the workes of darkenesse they are wise *in their owne generation*, among men like themselves but this is not the life wherein follie, and wisdom can be discerned so well,

Wicked
men wittie
in their ge-
neration.

well, it will appeare at the
houre of death, and the
day of judgement, then
those will be found wise,
that are wise for eterni-
ty, that have provided
how it shall goe with
them, when all earthly
things shall fayle them,
and those will bee *fooles*
that haue only a particu-
lar wit for the particular
passages of this life, to
contrive particular ends,
and neglect the mayne
they are penny wise, and
pound foolish. *Achitophel*
a wittie wiseman, his
counsell was an oracle, yet
he was not wise to pre-
vent his owne destructi-
on.

He

5.
He wounds
himselfe.

He is a madman, a *foole* that hurts and wounds himselfe, none else will doe so, wicked carnall men, they wound, and hurt, and stab their owne consciences, oh if any man should doe them but the thousandth part of the harme that they doethem selves every day, they would not indure it, they gall, and load their consciences with many sins, and they doe it to themselves; therefore it is a deserved title that is given them. *God* meetes with the pride of men in this terme of folly : for a wicked man above all things is carefull to avoid this

this imputation of *foole*,
account him what you
will, so you account him,
a shrewd man withall, that
can over-reach others,
that he is craftie and wise,
he glories in the reputati-
on of wisdom, though
God account him a *foole*,
and hee shall bee found so
afterward, and to abate the
pride of men, *Hee* brings
a disgracefull terme over
their wit and learning, and
calls them *fooles*.

This should abase any
man that is not a right and
sound Christian, that the
God of wisdom, and the
Scripture that is *GODS*
word esteemes of all wic-
ked men, bee they what
they

Vse 1.
To humble
wicked
men.

they will, to be *fooles*, and that in their owne judgments if they bee not *Atheists*, if they will grant the principles they pretend to beleve.

Let this therefore bee an aggravation in your thoughts when you are tempted to commit any sinne, Oh! besides that it is a transgression and rebellion against *Gods* commandement, it is *follicie in Israel*, and this will bee *bitternesse in the end*.

²
Aggravati-
on of sinne.

Is hee not a *foole*, that will doe that in an instant, that hee may repent many yeeres after? Is hee not a *foolish* man (in matter of dyet) that will take that,
that

that he shall complaine of
a long time after ? None
will bee so *foolish* in out-
ward things. So when we
are tempted to sinne,
thinke, is it not *follicie* to
doe this, when the time
will comethat I shall wish
it undone againe, with the
losse of a world if I had it
to giue ?

And begge of God the
wisedome of the holy
Ghost, to judge aright of
things, the *eye salve of the*
Spirit of God, to discern of
things that differ : to judge
spirituall riches to be best,
and spirituall nobilitie and
excellencie to be best, and
to judge, of sinfull cour-
ses to be base, how ever
other-

3
Begge spi-
rituall wis-
dome.

otherwise gainfull let us labour for grace, *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, those that doe not feare the Lord they haue no wisdom.

4.
Not to
passe for
the cen-
sures of the
wicked

And passe not for the vaine censures of wicked men, thou art hindred from the practise of religious duties and from a conscionable course of life, why? Perhaps thou shalt be accounted a foole by whom? By those that are *fooles* indeed, in the judgement of him who is *wisdom* indeed, God himselfe: who would care to be accounted a *foole* of a *foole*? We see the scripture judgeth wicked men here to be *fooles*. We

Wee must not extend it only to wicked men, but euen likewise Gods children when they yeeld to their corruptions, and passions they are *foolish* for the time, in *Psa. 38. 5.*

My wounds stinke and are corrupt because of my foolishnesse, and in Psa. 73. So foolish was I and ignorant, &c.

Therefore when any base thought of *Gods* providence comes in our mind, or any temptation to sin let us thinke it *folly* and when we are overtaken with any sin, let us *be-foole* our selues, and judge it as *God* doth to bee *foolishnesse*, this is the

C

ground

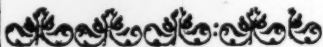
Folly in Gods children.

Psa. 38. 5.

Psal. 73.

ground and foundation of repentance : So much for the quality of the person here described, *Fooles*.

I come to the Cause.



Because of their transgressions and because of their iniquities.

Transgression, especially hath reference to rebellion against *God*, and his ordinances in the first table, *Iniquity*, hath reference to the breach of the second table against men, and both these have their rise from folly, for want of

of wisdom causeth rebellion against God, and iniquity against men, all breaches of Gods will come from spirituall folly.

Why doth hee begin with *transgressions* against the first table, and then iniquities the breach of the second?

Because all breaches of the second table issue from the breach of the first a man is never vniust to his neighbours, that doth not rebell against Gods will in the first table, and the foundation of obedience, & dutie to man, it riseth from mans obedience

The breach of the second table comes from the breach of the first.

ence to *God*. Therefore the *second table* is like the *first* that is, our loue to our neighbour is like to our loue of *God*, not only like it but it springs from it : for all comes from the loue of *God*, therefore the first command of the first table runs through all the Commandements, *Thou shalt honour God*; and honour man, because we honour *God*. A man never denies obedience to his superiour to the magistrate, &c. but he denies it to *God* first, a man never wrongs man, but he disobeys *God* first, Therefore the *Apostles* lay the duties of the second table in the Scriptures

Scriptures vpon the first,
Saint *Paul* alway begins
his Epistles, with the du-
ties to *God*, and religion
and when he hath dischar-
ged that he comes to pa-
rents, and masters, and
children, and servants, and
such particular duties, be-
cause the spring of our duty
to man, is our duty to *God*,
and the first justice is the
justice of religion to *God*,
when we are not just to
giue *God* his due: there-
upon come all breaches
in our civill conuersation,
and commerce with men,
for want of the feare of
God, men doe this, as *Io-
seph* sayd, *how shall I doe
this and offend God?* and

C 3 *Abraham*

11 *Abraham* he had a conceit they would abuse his wife, *Surely the feare of God is not here*, therefore he thought they would not be afraid to doe any thing, he that feares not *God* if opportunitie serue, he will not be afraid to violate the second table hee that feares *God* hee will reason, *how shall I doe this*, to wrong another in his name, and reputation, or in his estate, & sin against *God*? for I cannot sinne against man, but I must first sin against *God*, that is the reason he sets it downe thus, *transgressions and iniquities*.

See

See an vnhappy successi-
on of sinne, that where
there is transgression there
will be *iniquitie*, when a
man yeelds to lust once
presently he breaks upon
Gods due, and then upon
mans, one sin drawes on
another, as wee see *Da-
vid* giving way to one sin,
it brought another, so the
giving way to *transgressi-
on*, neglecting the word of
God, and duties of religi-
on presently another fol-
lowes neglect of dutie to
men.

Take heed of the be-
ginnings of sinne, there
are degrees in Sathans
schoole from ill to worse
till we come to worst of

C 4

all,

Unhappy
succession
of sin.

Vse.
Take heed
of begin-
nings of
sinne.

all, and there is no staying
it is like the descent down
a steepe hill, let us stop in
the beginning by any
meanes, as we would a-
void *iniquitie*, let us take
heed of *transgression*.



Are afflicted.

THEE meanes especi-
ally that affliction of
sicknesse as appeares by
the words following.

Doct.
Sinne the
cause of
sicknesse.

*Sin is the cause of all
sicknesse.*

*Foolles for their trans-
gressions, and iniquities are
afflicted :*

afflicted: for Gods quarrell is especially against the soule, and to the body because of the soule, I will not dwell on this point having spoken of it, at large on another text.

1 Cor. 11.
31.

The Use that I will make of it now shall bee,
First of all, *If sinne be the cause of all sicknesse*, Let us justifie God, and condemne our selues, complaine of our selues, and not of God; *Wherfore doth the living man complaine, and murmur, and fret, Man suffereth for his sinne, Iustifie God and judge our selues. I wil beare the wrath the Lord because I haue sinned against him, judge our*

Use 1.
To justifie
God.

C 5

selues

selues and we shall not bee judged.

²
To be patient.

Then againe is *sin the cause of sicknes*, it should teach us patience, *I held my tongue because thou Lord diddest it*, Shall not a man be patient in that he hath procured by his owne cvill and sin?

³
Search out our particular sin.

And search our selues, for usually it is for some particular sin, which conscience will tell a man of, and sometimes the kind of the punishment will tell a man, for sins of the body, *God punisheth in the body he payes men home, in their owne coyne, what measure a man measureth to others shall bee measured*

to him againe. If a man have beene cruell to others, God will stirre vp those that shall be so to him, therefore we should labour to part with our particular *transgressions and iniquities*. It is a generall truth for all ill whatsoeuer as well as this of sicknesse. Therefore we should first of all goe to God by confession of sinne. It is a preposterous course that the atheisticall carelesse world takes, where the Physitian ends, there the divine begins, when they know not what to doe. If diseases come from sinne then make vse of the divine first to certifie

To seeke
God in
trouble.

The
course of
worldlings

Psal. 32.

tifie the conscience, and to acquaint a man with his owne mercy. First to search them, and let them see the guilt of their sins and thento speake comfort to them, and to set accounts straite betweene God, & them, as in Ps. 32. (an excellent place *David roared, his moysture was turned into the drought of summer, what course doth hee take? he doth not run to the Physitian presently but goes to God. Then sayd I it was an inward resolution, and speech of the mind, then I concluded with my selfe, I will confesse my sinne to God, and thou forgavest my ini. quities*)

quities and sinne, so body,
and soule were healed at
once. Divinity herein tran-
scends all other Arts, not
onely corrupt nature, and
corrupt courses but all o-
ther: For the Phisitian
hee looks to the cause of
the sicknesse out of a man
or in a man, out of a man
and then especially in
contagious sicknesse, hee
looks to the influence of
the heavens, in such a
yeare, such conjunctions,
and such eclipses haue
beene, hee looks to the
infection of the Ayre to
subordinate causes, to
contagious company, and
to diet, &c. And then in
a man to the distemper of
the

Divinity
transcends
other arts.

Sicknesse
how from
God, how
from sin.

the humours, and of the spirits, when the instrument of nature is out of tune it is the cause of sicknesse. But the divine, and every Christian (that should be a divine in this respect) goes higher and sees all the discord betweene *God*, and vs, there is not that sweet harmony there, and so all the jarres in second causes come from *God* as the cause inflicting, from sin, as the cause demeriting : The Divine considers those two alway : The Phisitian lookes to the inward distemper and the outward contagion, and this is well, and may be done

done without sin, but men must ioyne this too, to looke into conscience, and looke vp to *God* together with looking for helpe to the Physitian, because we haue especially to deale with *God*.

I would this were considered that wee might carry our selues more Christian-like vnder any affliction whatsoeuer, what is the reason that people murmure, & strugle, and striue *as a bull in a net* as the *Prophet* speakes, when *God* hampers them in some judgement? They looke to the second causes, and neuer looke to cleare the conscience, of
sinne

The cause
of murmuring in
trouble.

sinne, nor never looke to
God, when indeed the
ground of all is God
offended by sinne,

*Foolles for their transgres-
sions are afflicted.*

Sin puts a
rod in
Gods hand

We by our sins put a
rod into Gods hand, *A rod
for the foolles backe* as *Salomon*
saith, and when wee
will be *fooles* wee must
needs indure the scourge
and rod in one kind or
other: those that will sin
must looke for a rod, it is
the best reward of wic-
ked, and vaine *fooles* that
make a jest of sinne, (as the
wiseman saith) *They cast
firebrands, and say am I not
in jest?* That raile and
scorne at good things,
that

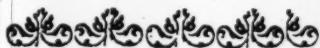
that sweare, and carrie
 themselves in a loose, ri-
 diculous scandalous fa-
 shion, as if God did not
 eye their carriage, and
 yet *am I not in jest?* Well,
 it is no jesting matter,
 sinne is like a secret poy-
 son, perhaps it doth not
 worke presently, as there
 are some kind of subtile
 poysons made in these
 dayes (wherein the Devill
 hath whetted mens wits)
 that will worke perhaps a
 yeare after, so sinne if it
 be once committed per-
 haps it doth not kill pre-
 sently, but *there is death*
in the Pot, thou art a
child of death, as soone
 as euer thou hast commit-
 ted

Sin a poy-
 son.

Salvian

ted sinne, as *Salvian* saith well, *thou perishest before thou perishest*, the sentence is upon thee, thou art a dead man, God to wait for thy repentance prolongs thy dayes, but as soone as thou hast sinned without repentance, thou art a *child of death*, and as Poyson that workes secretly a while, yet in time it appeares, so at last *the fruit of sinne will bee death*, Sin and death came in together :take heed of all sinne, it is no dallying matter.

Their



*Their soule abhorres all
manner of meate.*

Extremity
of sicknes.

THIS is one branch
of the extremitie of
the sicknesse, the *loathing
of meate*, for God hath put
a correspondencie, be-
tweene food that is nece-
sary for man, and mans
relish : for man being in
this world to be suppor-
ted, the naturall moysture
being to be supplied, and
repayred by nourishment
as it is spent by the natu-
rall heate which feeds up-
on it, therefore God hath
put a sweetnesse into
meate

meate that man might delight to do that which is necessary: for who would care for meate if it were not necessary? Therefore being necessary *God* hath put delightfull tastes in meates to draw men to the use of them, to preserve their being for the serving of him. Now when these things favour not, when the relish of a man is distempered that he cannot judge aright of meats, when the palate is viciated, there must needs follow sicknesse, for a man cannot do that that should maintaine his strength, he cannot feed on the creature, therefore the

Naturall
cause of
sicknesse:

the *Palmist* setting downe
the extremity of sicknesse,
he sayth *their soule abhor-*
reth all manner of meate,
This the great Phisitician
of heaven and earth, sets
downe as a symptome of
a sick state when one can-
not relish and digest meat,
experience seales this *truth*
and prooues it to be true.

You see then the happi-
nes of *Epicures* how vnsta-
ble and vaine it is, whose
chiefe good is in the crea-
ture, *God* by sicknesse can
make them dis-relish all
manner of meate, and
where is the *summum bo-*
num then of all your belly-
gods, your sensuall persons

Againe in that he saith,
Their

Happines
of *Epicures*
vnstable.

To blesse
God for
appetite.

*Their soule abhorreth all
manner of meate*, it
should teach us to blesse
God, not only for meate
but for stomacks to eate,
it is a blessing common,
and therefore forgotten. It
is a double blessing when
God provides dayly for
our outward man and then
gives a stomack to relish
his goodaesse in the crea-
ture, sometimes a poore
man wants meate, and
hath a stomacke : some-
times a rich man wants a
stomacke, when hee hath
meate, they that haue
both haue cause to blesse
God, because it is a judg-
ment when God takes a-
way the appetite that men
abhorre

abhorre and loath all manner of meate.

Therefore if we would maintaine thankfulnessse to God, labour to thanke God for common blessings, what if God should take away a mans stomacke, we see his state here he is *at the gates of death*, therefore thanke God that he main- taines us with comforts in our pilgrimage, and with- all that he gives us strength to take the comfort of the creature.

Wee see here againe one rule how to converse with them that are sicke, blessed is hee that understands the estate of the afflicted and sicke, not to take it ill to see

How to
converse
with the
sicke.

see them wayward, it comes not from the mind, but from the distemper of the body : as wee beare with children, so we must beare with men in those distempers, if they have foode, and yet loath it, you see how 'tis with men in that case, *Their soule abhorreth all manner of meate*, It should teach us to sympathize with those that are sicke, if we see them in these distempers.

The next branch of the extremitie is;

They



*They draw neere the
gates of death.*

DEATH is a great
Commander, a
great Tyrant,
and hath *gates*
to sit in, as Iudges and Ma-
gistrates used to *sit in the*
gates. There are things
implied in this phrase.

First, *They draw neere*
to the gates of death, that is,
they were *neere to death*,
as he that *drawes neere the*
gates of a Citie, is *neere*
the Citie, because the
D *gates*

Gates of
death.

Death is
selfe.

gates enter into the Citie.

²
Authority
of death,

Secondly, *gates* are applied to *death* for authority, they were almost in *deaths jurisdiction*; *death* is a great Tyrant, hee rules over all the men in the world, over Kings, and Potentates, over meane men, and the greatest men feare death most: hee is *the King of feares* as *Iob* calls him, I, and the feare of Kings. Yet *death* that is thus feared in this life by wicked men, at the day of judgement, of all things in the world they shall desire *death* most, according to that in the Apocalips, *They shall desire death, and*
it

Misery of
wicked
men.

it shall not come to them,
they shall subsist to eter-
nall myserie ; that, that
men are most affraid of in
this life, that they shall
wish most to come to
them in the world to
come, Oh that I might
die ! What a pittifull state
are wicked men in ? there-
fore it is called the *Gate*
of death, it rules and over-
rules all mankind : there-
fore it is sayd to *reigne*,
Rom. 5. Death and sinne
came in together, sinne was
the gate that let in *death*,
and ever since *death* raig-
ned, and will, till *Christ*
perfectly triumph over it,
who is the King of that
Lord and Commander,
D 2 and

Rom. 5.

and hath the key of hell and death: To wicked men (I say) hee is a Tyrant, and hath a gate, and when they goethrough the gate of death, they goe to a worse, to a lower place, to hell, it is the trappe-doores to Hell.

3.
Power of
death.

Thirdly, by the gate of death is meant not onely the authority, but the power of death, as in the Gospell, *The gates of hell shall not prevaile against it* that is, the power, and strength of hell, so here it implies the strength of death, which is very great for it subdues all, it is the executioner of Gods justice.

If

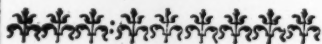
If death have such
 a Iurisdiction, and power,
 and strength, let us la-
 bour to disarme it before
 hand, it is in our power
 to make death stinglesse,
 and toothlesse, and harm
 lesse: nay wee may make
 it advantageous, for the
gate of death may become
 the gate of happinesse: let
 us labour to have our
 part, and portion in *Christ*,
 who hath the *key of hell*
and death, who hath o-
 vercome and conquered
 this tyrant, *Oh death where*
is thy sting? oh grave where
is thy victory? 1 Cor. 15.
Thanks be vnto God who
hath given vs victory
through Iesus Christ our
 D 3 Lord,

• Use.
 To disarme
 death.

2 Cor. 15.

Lord, that now wee need
not feare *death*, that
though *death* have a *gate*,
yet it is a *gate*, to let us in-
to heaven, as it is a doore
to let the wicked into
hell; So much for that.

In the next place wee
come to their carriage in
their extremity.



*They Cryed to God in
their trouble.*

This is the carriage
of man in extreame
ills; if hee haue any feare
of *God* in him, to pray
and then prayers are *cries*
they

they are darted out of the heart as it were to heaven. It is sayd, *Christ made strong cries*, in extremity prayers are *cries* hence I observe breifly these things.

That *God* suffers men to fall into extreame ills even to the gates, of death, that there is but a step between them and death.

Why?

To weane them perfectly from the world. To make them more thankfull when they recover: for what is the reason that men are so
D 4 sleight

Doct.
God suffers men to fall to great misery.

Reas. 1.

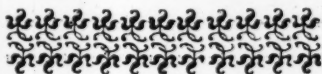
slight in thanksgiving ?
Usually the reason is
they did not conceive
that they were in such
extreame danger as they
were.

3.

Likewise he suffers men
to fall into extreame sick-
nesse that he may have all
the glory, for it was his
doing, there was no se-
cond cause to helpe here,
*for their soule abhorred all
manner of meate, and they
were even at the Gates of
death,* Now when all
second causes faile, then
God is exalted therfore he
suffers men to fall into ex-
treimity, the greater the
maladie, the more is the
glory of the Physitian.

The

The second thing is this,
as God brings his chil-
dren into extremity, So;



*Gods children in extre-
mity they cry to him.*

Gods chil-
dren cry to
him in af-
fliction.

EXtremity of afflicti-
ons doth force pray-
ers, *In their affliction,
they will seeke me early :*
When all second causes
faile then we goe to God,
naturetherforeisagainst a-
theisme (as one observes)
that naturally men run to
God in extremity; Lord
*helpe mee, Lord succour
me, so especially in the*
D 5 Church

Atheisme
against na-
ture.

Why God
sendeth af-
fliction.

Church in extremitie,
Gods people cry to *God*,
 and as afflictions, so p. r-
 ticularly this of sicknesse
 of body, drives men to
God. *God* should not heare
 of us (many times) unlesse
 he should come neere us
 by afflictions, and deepe
 afflictions: *Out of the deepe*
baue I cryed, *God* brings
 us to the deepe, and then
 we crie. Our nature is so
 naught, that *God* should
 not heare of us, (as I sayd)
 unlesse he send some mes-
 senger after us, some af-
 fliction to bring us home
 as *Absalom* dealt by *Ioab*,
 when hee fired his corne.
 In the Gospel, *Christ* had
 never heard of many peo-
 ple,

ple, had it not beene for
some infirmity: but blef-
sed are those sicknesses,
and infirmities that occa-
sion us to goe to *God*, that
makes us crie to *God*. It
was the speech of a *Hea-
then*, *we are best when we
are weakest*, why? as hee
saith very well, who is
ambitious, voluptuous, or
covetous for the world
when he is sick, when he
sees the vanity of these
things?

This should make us
submit more meekly vn-
to *G O D*, when wee are
vnder his hand when we
are his prisoners by sick-
nesse, when he casts us on
our sicke beds, because

G O D

To submit
to *God* pa-
tiently.

GOD is working our good, hee is drawing us nearer to him.

Then they cryed to him.

Prayer a
speciall re-
medie in
affliction.

So wee see then that *prayer it is a remedie in a remedilesse estate*, when there is no other remedy and this one difference betweene a child of GOD and another; In extremitie a carnall man that hath not grace, he hath not a spirit of prayer to goe to GOD, but a child of GOD, he criesto GOD, hee had acquaintance with *God* in the time of health, therefore he goes boldly to GOD as a father

ther in the time of extremity. Gods children can answer *Gods* dealing; for as he brings his children to extremitie, when there is no second cause to help, so they answer him by faith, in extremitie when there is nothing to trust unto, they trust him. when there is no physick in the world that can charme the disease, they have a spirit of faith to answer *Gods dealing*, in the greatest misery, as *Iob* faith, *though he kill me yet will I trust in him.*

For GOD is not tyed to second causes, and therefore if hee *have delight in us*, and if he have
any

any service for us to doe
he can recover vs from
the *gates of death*, Nay
from death it selfe, as we
see *Christ* in the Gospell
ray sed from the dead, and
at the resurrection he will
rayse us from death much
more can he rayse vs from
the *gates of death* when
wee are *neere death*.

To be in
a state fit
to pray.

Therefore considering
that prayer is a remedy
in all maladies, in a reme-
dileffe estate, Let us la-
bour to haue a spirit of
prayer, and to be in such
a state as we may pray.

What state is that?

1.
Take heed
of knowne
sinne.

First take heed of being
in

in league with any sinne,
If I regard iniquitie in my
heart, God will not heare my
prayer, nay he will not
 heare others prayers for
 us, oh what a pittiful state
 is it when *God* will not
 heare us nor others for
 us! *Pray not for this peo-*
ple (saith *God* to *Jeremi-*
ah) and if *Noah, Daniel,*
and Iob stood before mee
they should but deliver
their owne soules. If a man
 be in a peremp'tory course
 of sinne, and will not be
 reclaymed, but is like the
deafe Adder that will not
bee charmed, *God* will not
 heare prayers for him: will
God heare a rebell when he
 comes to him for mercie,
 and

and is in a course opposite to *Gods* will : As if a Traitor should come to sue for pardon with a dagger in his hand; which were to increase the treason : So when a man comes to *God* and cryes to him and yet purposeth to live in sinne, and his conscience tells him that hee offers violence to *G O D* by his sins, and lives in rebellious courses, *G O D* will not heare his prayers.

2.
Heare *God*
calling on
us.

Againe if we would bee in such a state as *God* may accept us when wee come to him, let us heare *G O D* when hee cryes to us, hee cryes to us in the ministrie of the word, *Wisedome*
bath

hath lift up her voyce, and this is Gods course, hee will heare us when wee heare him, Hee that turnes his eare from hearing of the Law, his prayer shall bee abhominable. Those that doe not attend upon Gods ordinances, that will have a kind of devotion private to themselves, & avoid the publike ordinance, that feare perhaps they shall heare somewhat that would awaken their conscience, and they would not bee tormented before their time, Let them consider (it is a terrible speech of Salomon) Hee that turnes his eare from hearing the Law, his prayer shall be abhominable.

ble. Let us take heed, it is a fearefull thing to bee in such an estate, that neither our owne prayers, nor others shall bee regarded for us, and let any man judge, if wee will not heare GOD speake to us, is it fit that hee should heare us speaking to him?

And before I leave the point, let mee presse it a little further, at this time wee have cause to blesse GOD for the *deliverance of the Citie*: Oh! but let all that have the spirit of prayer, that have any familiaritie with GOD, improve all their interest in heaven at this time, doe wee not conceive what dan-

Exhortati-
on to pray-
er.

danger wee are in? What enemies wee have provoked? What if wee be free from the sicknesse, are we not in great danger of worse matters then the sicknesse? *Is it not worse to fall into the hands of our enemies?* Have wee not great, provoked, cruell Idolatrous enemies? therefore let us joyntly now all cry to GOD, and importune him, that hee would bee good to the State, that as he hath given us a pledge of his favour in delivering us from the plague, so hee would not bee weary of doing good unto us, but that hee would still make it a token of further favours,

Prayer best
before af-
fliction.

vours, and deliverances hereafter: That as *Hee* delivered us in former times, in 88, and magnified his mercie to us, so now *Hee* would not expose us to the crueltie of Idolatrous enemies, *whose mercies are cruell*. Let us stirre up our selves; *Securitie and carelesnesse alway fore-runnes one destruction or other.*

Prayer will doe a great deale more good, now, then when trouble hath overtaken us, for now it is a signe it comes from a religious seeking of *God*, then it comes from selfe-love. There is a great deale of difference, when

a malefactor seeks to the judge before the time of the Assises, and when hee seeks to him at the present time, for then it is meerly out of selfe respect and not respect to him. If wee seeke to God now hee will single, and marke out those that mourne for the sins of the time, and poure out their spiritsto him in prayer that hee would still dwell and continue the meanes of salvation amongst us, when *God I say comes to gather his Iewells Mal. 3.* He will single, and cull out them as peculiar to himselfe.

Therefore let us in all our prayers put in the Church,

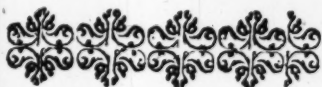
Mal. 3:

Remember the Church in our prayers.

Church, things doe more
then speake, they cry to
usto cry to **GOD** earnest-
ly, put case wee bee not in
trouble our selves, our
prayers will bee the more
acceptable: before trouble
come it is the onely way
to prevent it, as it is the on-
ly way to rescue us when
we are in trouble.

I come now to the re-
medie.

Hee



*Hee saved them out of
their distresse.*



GOD is a Physiti-
an good at all
manner of sick-
nesses, it is no
matter what the disease
bee, if G O D bee the Phy-
sitian, though they bee as
these *at the gates of death*,
hee can fetch them backe;
herein G O D differs from
all other Physitians.

First of all hee is a gene-
rall Physitian, hee can
heale a Land, a whole
King-

God the
best Physi-
tian.

2 Chron. 7.
14.

Kingdome of sicknesse,
of pestilence and as it is in,
2 Chro. 7. 14.

Then he is a Physitian
of body, and soule, of
both parts; And then he
is not tyed to meanes.

Other Physitions can
cure, but they must haue
meanes. Other Physitians
cannot cure all manner
of diseases, nor in all pla-
ces, but God can cure all.

*He saved them out of their
distresse.*

Other phisitians cannot
bee alway present but
God is so to euery one of
his patients he is a com-
passionate tender present
Physitian.

Which should incou-
rage

rage vs in any extremity
(especially in sicknesse of
body) to haue recourse to
God, and never to despaire
though wee bee brought
never so low, he that can
rayse the dead bodies, can
rayse vs out of any sick-
nesse; therefore let vs use
the meanes, and when
there is no meanes trust
God: for hee can worke
beyond meanes, and with-
out meanes.

*They cryed to the Lord,
and he saved them out of
their distresse; It was the
fruit of their prayers.*

*There was never any
prayer from the beginning
E of*

• Use.

To haue
recourse to
God in
sicknes.

Doct.

Prayer to
God suc-
cessefull

*of the world made to God
successlesly.*

Pfal. 38.

Rom. 8.

What should I speake
of prayer, our very brea-
things are known to God
when wee cannot speake
our sighs, as it is Psal. 38.
*My groanes and sighs are
not hid from thee. God hath
a bottle for our teares, and
preserves our sighes and
groanes, there is nothing
that is spirituall in us, but
God regards, as in Rom. 8.
We know not what to aske,
but the spirit of God stir-
reth up in us sighs and
groanes that cannot be ex-
pressed, And God heares
the voyce of the sighs of
his owne spirit.*

Let

Let us also bee exhorted from this issue, to *cry unto the Lord* : for there was never any man did, sow prayers in the breast and bosome of *God*, but he received the fruit of it, he is a *God hearing prayer*, hee will not loose his *attribute*. Nay, further (marke) the instances in this Psalm, are not made onely of men in the Church, but likewise of men out of the Church, of men that have not the true religion, they pray to *G O D*, as creatures to the Creator, and though *G O D* have not their soules, yet hee will not bee beholding to any
E 2
man

God hears
heathens,

man for duties, if *Ahab* do but hypocritically fast, *Ahab* shall haue outward deliverance for his outward humiliation, and these men mentioned in the text, if they call to God but as creatures, and not to Idols, God will regard them in outward things, and deliver them. God will not be in any mans debt for any service to him though it bee outward.

Much more
his children

And doe we think that he that regards *dogges out of the Church*, will neglect his children *in the Church*? Hee that regards heathen men when they pray to him in their extremity

tremity, and delivers them
to shew his over-flowing
bounty, and goodnesse,
will hee not regard his
owne children, that haue
the spirit of *Adeption*, of
supplication, and pray-
er, that put vp their suits,
and supplications, in the
mediation, and sweete
name of *Christ*? will he
not regard the name, and
intercession of his sonne
and of his spirit, the Ho-
ly Ghost stirring vp pray-
ers in them, and the state
of his children, being his
by adoption, since he re-
gards the very heathen.

Nay more then so, *God*
heares the very young ra-
vens, and spreads a table

for euery living thing, and will not suffer them to die for hunger, but provides for them, because they are his creatures, and will hee not for his children, those that he hath taken to be so neere him to be heires of heaven, & happinesse? Let us I say, be encouraged to cry unto the Lord upon all occasions, if *God* bee so good as to deliver sinfull men (that haue nothing in them but the principles of nature) when they flye to *God* in praier, as the author and preserver of nature, much more will hee heare his owne children, *he will giue his spirit to them that aske him, Luke 11.*

Luke 11.

But

But here may an objection be made, I haue cried long, I am hoarse with crying, I haue wayted a long time, I haue bin a long time sick, or annoyed with some particular trouble, & God seemes as it were to stop his ears, to harden his heart against me, to shut up his bowels of compassion, and pittie, therefore I were as good giue ouer as continue still crying, and not be heard.

I answer, there is no one duty almost more pressed in scripture then *waiting & watching to prayer*, waite still, hath not God waited thy leasure long enough, and wilt not thou waite on him? E 4 A

Object.

Ans.
Wayting
after pray-
er necessary.

A patient when he fees
his body distempered with
Phyficke, oh hee cries out
partly for the Phyfick, and
partly for the sicknes, that
trouble him both together,
and make civill warre in
his body, yet notwithstanding
the Physitian wisely
lets it worke he ; shall have
no cordiall, nor nothing to
hinder it, he lets it goe on
till the Phyficke have
wrought well, & carried a-
way the malignant matter,
that he may be the better
for it, and that hee is a lo-
ving and tender Physitian,
yet so *God* when we are in
trouble it is as Phyfick we
cry but *God* he *turnes the*
glasse as the Physitians
doe,

doe ; nay this time shall
 be expired it shall work
 so long, till thy pride be
 taken away, thou shalt be
 humbled throughly, till
 thou be weaned from thy
 former wicked pleasures,
 till thou be prepared to
 receiue further blessings;
 therefore they *crie*, and
crie, and God deferrēs to
 heare the *voyce of his*
children, in the meane
 time he loues to heare
 the *cry of his children*, and
 their prayer is as *sweet in-*
cense, yet he deferrēs stil,
 but all is for the patients
 good, be not weary of
 waiting, it is a great mercy
 that hee makes thee
 able to continue crying

God de-
 ferres for
 our good.

E 5 that

Beloved
sins hinder
prayer.

that thou *hast the spirit of Prayer*, that thou canst poure out thy soule to *God*, it is a great mercy and so account of it.

Perhaps thou hast not cast out thy *Jonas*, thy *Achan*, that there is some particular sinne, vnrepented of, and thou cryest and cryest but thy sinne cries louder, thy pride, or thy oppression cries, thy wicked course cries, thou cryest unto *God*, and there is another thing cries in thee, that cries vengeance as thou doest for mercie, therefore search out thy *Achan*, cast out thy beloved sinne, *see if thou regard iniquity*

ty in thy heart, if thou regard any pleasing, or profitable, or gainfull sin, and neverthinke that God will heare thee till that bee out, for it will out-cry thy prayers.

The next thing is the manner of *Gods* cure.



Hee sent his word and bealed them.



W H A T word?

His secret commaund, his will.

Let such a thing be, as in the creation, *Let there be light, &c.* Besides his

Gods powerfull word.

Gods com-
mand over
all things.

his word written, there is his word creating, and preserving things created, and so here restoring them that were sicke, *Hee sent his word and healed them*, and so at the resurrection, his *Word*, his voyce shall raise our bodies againe. It is a strange manner of cure for God to cure by his word, by his commaund. It shewes that God hath an universall commaund of all things in the world, in heaven, and earth, over divells, and over sicknesses, as it is said in the Gospell, *Hee rebuked the sicknesses*, Hee can rebuke the agues, the plague, and the pestilence, and they shall bee

bee gone by his word, as
the Centurion sayd, *I am a
man that have servants un-
der mee, and I say to one
come, and hee commeth, and
to another goe, and he goeth,*
so thou hast all things un-
der thee, thou art G O D,
and if Thou say to a
disease, *Come, it commeth,*
if Thou say goe, *it goeth,*
G O D sent his word of com-
mand and healed them. It
is but a word of God to
heale, but a word of God;
to strike, Hee is the Lord
of Hostes, *If Hee doe but
hisse (as the Prophet saith)
for the flie of Egypt ; If
Hee doe but call for an E-
nemie, they come at his
word, as wee see in Pha-
raohs*

raobs plagues, the *Flies*, and *Frogs*, all things obey his word.

There is a secret obedience in all things to *God*, when his will is that they shall doe this or that: why doth the Sea keepe his bounds, when as the nature and position of the Sea is to bee above the earth? It is the command of *God* that hath sayd, Let it bee there, and *hither shall thy proud waves goe, and no further*. I might give many instances how *God* doth all by his word; The Divells are at his word, the whales, the Sea, when *Christ* rebukes it obeyes.

It

It should teach us not to displease this G O D, that can strike us in the midst of our sinnes even with a word. Let us feare this G O D, put case we had no enimie in the world, God can arme a mans humours against him, he can raise the spirit, and soule against it selfe, and make it fight against it selfe by desperate thoughts, hee needed not forreine forces for *Achitophel*, and *Saul*, he could arme their owne soules against themselves. And when hee will take downe the greatest Gyant in the world, he needs not forreine forces, it is but working of a disease, but giving

• Use.
Take heed
of displeasing
God.

giving way to a humour,
but inflaming the spirits,
and the soule shall *abhorre*
all manner of meat.

Againe, he gives a com-
mand, a rebuke, and they
are gone presently, there-
fore let us not offend this
great *God*, that is com-
mander of heaven, and
earth; let us labour to
please him, and it is no
matter who else wee dis-
please: for hee hath all
things at his command,
even the *hearts of kings as*
the rivers of water, when
Esau sought for *Iacob* to
hurt him, there was a se-
cret command *God* set up-
on him to love him; there-
fore we should feare him,
and

and all other things shall feare us, we need feare nothing (so we have a care to feare *God*) further then in *God*, and for *God*; but not so to feare them, as to doe evill for them, and offend the great *God* that can with a word command *sicknesse* to come or bid it be gone.

Againe, in that *God* when all second causes faile can *heale by his word*, therefore, let us never bee discouraged from *praying* though wee see a hurly-burly, and tumult in the *Church*, though we see all *Europe* in combustion, and the *Church* driven in to a narrow corner, let us not give over *prayer*; for
Christ,

Incourage-
ment to
pray from
Gods pow-
er.

Christ, that with a word commanded the *waves* to be still, and the *divels* to be gone, and they presently obeyed him; he can still the waves of the *Church*? hee can put a *hooke* into the *nostrils* of his enemies, and draw them which way hee please, he can still all with *his word*; therefore howsoever things seeme to run contrary, and opposite to our desires, yet let us not give over, hee that sees no ground of hope in carnall fleshly reason, let him despair of nothing, *despaire shuts the gate, and doore of mercy and hope*, as it were: you see here when all meanes faile, when they were

were at *the very gates*, and
 entrie of *death*, God fetch-
 eth them backe againe;
 how? with phyfick? no,
 hee is not tyed to phy-
 ficke, there is difference
 betweene *God*, and be-
 tweene nature and art; na-
 ture and art can doe no-
 thing without meanes, but
 the *God* of nature and
 art can doe it with his
word. How made hee this
 heaven, and earth, this
 glorious fabrick? with
 his *word*; *Let there be light,*
and there was light, &c.
 And how shall hee restore
 all againe? with his migh-
 tie commanding *word*,
 how doth hee preserve
 things? by his *word*, how
 are

are things multiplyed? by his word, increase and multiplye, a word of blessing, he doth all things with his word.

Christs
word in his
abasement
powerfull.

So hee can confound his enemies with a word, Nay *Christ* in his greatest abasement when they came with staves, and armes to take him; *Whom seeke ye*, Saith hee that word struck downe all the Officers of the Scribes and Pharisees, they fell flat on the ground. Could he in his humiliation (before his great abasement on the crosse) strike downe his enemies with his word, what shall he doe at the day of judgement when all

all flesh shall appeare before him? And what can he doe now at the right hand of *God* in heaven? Let us never despaire, what state soever we be in, in our owne persons, or in respect of the *Church* or common wealth; Let us yet pray, yet sollicite *God*, and wrastle with him, for wee see here when they were at the *gates of death*, he fetcheth them againe with his *word*, hee can fetch things againe when they are at destruction, as it were, when mans wit is at a losse, that he knoweth not what course to take, *God* with a *word* can turne all things againe.

Oh



Oh that men would therefore prayse the Lord for his goodnesse, and for his wondrous works to the children of men!

Let them sacrifice the sacrifice of Thansgiving and declare his workes withrejoycing.



YOU see that God the great Physitian, he is good at all diseases, hee is never set at any thing for he can create helps, and remedies of nothing if there be none
in

in nature, hee can create
peace to the soule, in the
the middest of trouble of
conscience, *God* can make
things out of nothing, nay
out of contraries, you see
here, what this great Phy-
sician hath done hee fet-
ched them *from the gates*
of death when their soule
abhorred all manner of
meate, and what doth he
require for all this great
cure ? surely the text
tells us he looks for no-
thing but prayse.

oh

Oh that men would therefore prayse the Lord for his goodnesse, &c.

In which words you haue these circumstances considerable, together with the substance of the duty.

First the persons, who must prayse God, *Oh that men would prayse the Lord;*

And then the duty they are to performe, *to prayse God, to sacrifice to God, to declare his works,* one main duty expressed by three termes.

The third is, for what they should prayse him; *For his goodnesse,* It is the spring

spring of all: for all particular actions of *God* doe come from his nature, his nature is goodnesse it selfe and indeed all other attributes are founded on goodnesse, why is he gracious, and mercifull and *long-suffering*? because he is good, this is the primitive attribute.

And then another thing for which we must praise him, *For his wondrous workes for the children of men.*

Fourthly the manner how this should be done *with rejoycing, and singing* as the word signifies, *declare his workes with rejoycing.* For as all holy
F actions

actions muſt be done joyfully, and chearefully, ſo eſpecially prayſe, *God loveth a chearefull giver,* much more a chearefull thankſgiver: for chearfulneſſe is the very nature of thankſgiving, it is a dead ſacrifice of thankſgiving it is a dead ſacrifice elſe theſe are the mayne things conſiderable in theſe words,

Fiſt of all of the perſons.

Oh



*Oh that men would prayse
the Lord.*



H E blessed
Psalmist who-
soever he were,
(directed by the
spirit of God,) hee would
haue all men to prayse
God, not onely those that
participate and haue inte-
rest in the fauour but
the beholders also of the
goodnesse of God to o-
thers, for here hee that

All men to
praise God.

F 2

was

Sabbes. R.

22501

To praise
God for o-
thers.

was not interessed in these favours for his owne particular, yet hee prayseth *God* for the blessings to others, and hee wisheth that *God* might haue praise from them.

Especially
for our
selues.

For we are all of one societie, of one family, wee are all brethren, therefore wee must prayse *God* for his blessings, and benefits on others, and not onely our selues but we must wish that all would do so, and specially wee must *prayse God* for our selues, when we haue part of the benefit: for shall others *prayse God* for us, and shal not we for our selues? Shall the Churches of *God* a-
abroad.

abroad *praiſe God*, for his great deliverance of this citie, (as there is no Church in the world that heares of it, but is thankfull for it) and ſhall not wee for our ſelues? Shall the angels in heaven *praiſe God*, and ſing for the redemption of the Church by the blood of Chriſt, *Glory to God on high peace on earth, good will to men*, and ſhall not we that haue intereſt in the worke of redemption: For Chriſt is not a mediator of redemption to Angels hee hath relation to them in another reſpect, yet they out of loue to *God*, and the Church, and a deſire

F 3 to

Luke 2.13.
14.

Creatures
praise God
how.

to glorifie God, hey prayse
God for this, and shall not
wee much more for our
selues? wee must prayse
God our selues and desire
that all would doe so, as
he saith here, *Oh that men
would prayse the Lord, &c.*
and in some other *Psalmes*,
he stirs up all the creatures
bayle, and snow, and winde
and all to prayse God.

How can these praise
God?

They doe it by our
mouthes by giving vs oc-
casion to prayse him. And
they praise him in them-
selues: for as the creature
groaneth, *Rom. 8.* That
none

Rom. 8.

none knowes but *God*,
and it selfe, they groane
for the corruption, and
abuse that they are sub-
ject unto, and *God* knowes
those groanes, so the crea-
ture hath a kind of voyce
likewise in *praying* of
God, they declare in their
nature the goodnesse of
God, and minister occasi-
on to us to *praise God*,
therefore the *Psalmist* be-
ing desirous that *God*
might be prayesed, for his
goodnesse and mercy, hee
stirres vp every creature,
Psal. 103. even the very
Angels, insinuating that
it is a worke fit for An-
gels.

Psal. 103.

The children of *God*,
F 4 haue

haue such a loue, and zeale to the glory of GOD, that they are not content only to *prayse* GOD themselves, but they stirre vp all: they need not to wish Angels to doe it, but only to shew their desire, oh the blessed disposition of those that loue God in Christ!

Wicked
men only
dishonour
God.

What shall wee thinke then of those wretched persons that greiue that the *word of God should run and haue free passage, and be glorious*, and that there should be a free use of the sacraments and the blessed meanes of salvation? they envie the glory of God, and the salvation of peoples

peoples soules. What shall we say to those that desire to heare *God* dishonoured, that perhaps sweare, and blaspheme themselves, or if they doe not yet they are not touched in their hearts for the dishonour of *God* by others, this is far from the disposition of a Christian, he desires that all creatures may trumpet out the prayse of *God*, from the highest Angell to the lowest creature, from the Sunne, and starres to the meanest shrub, only diuellish spirited carnal men take delight to blaspheme *God*, that can strike them with his word and send

F 5 them

them to their owne place to hell, without repentance) and can heare him dishonoured without any touch of spirit, a child of *God* desires *God* to be glorified from his very heart roote, and is greived when *God* is dishonoured any kind of way, so much breifly for the first,

Now what is the dutie this holy man wishes?

That



*That men would prayse
God. And sacrifice the sa-
crifice of thanksgiving,
and declare his workes.*

UT of the large-
nesse of his heart
he expresth the
same thing in
many words, therefore I
shall not need to make a-
ny scruple in particula-
rizing of them, because
there is not so much heed
to bee given in the ex-
pressions of a large heart
as to be punctuall in eve-
ry thing.

First

First he begins with prayse.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord, &c.

Prayse a
duty fit for
Angels.

It is a duty as I said before fit for Angels, fit? nay it is performed by them: For it is all the worke they doe, it is the onely worke that was religious, that *Adam* did in *Paradise*, and that we shall doe in heaven with *God*, therefore we are never more in Heaven, then when we take all occasions of blessing, and *praising God*, wee are never in a more happie state.

It is a duty therefore we should ayme at, and the rather



rather, because it is the
fruite, and end of all other
duties whatfoeuer ; what
is the end of all the good
we doe, but to shew our
thankfulnesse to *God* : the
end of our fruitfulness in
our place, that others may
take occasion to glorifie
God. What is the end of
our hearing ? To get
knowledge, and grace, that
wee may be the better a-
ble to prayse *God*, in our
mouths, and in our lives.
What is the end of recei-
ving the sacrament ? nay,
what is the duty it selfe ?
a thanksgiving ? what is
the end of prayer ? to
begge graces, and strength
that so we may carry our
selues

Prayse the
fruit, and
end of all
we doe.

Of hearing

Of the Sa-
crament.

selues in our places, as is fit, that so wee may not want those things without which we cannot so well glorifie God, so the end of all is to glorifie God.

Praying
God the
end of the
creation,

Rom. I.

It is the end that God intended in all, he framed all things to his owne prayse, in the creation. Why hath God given man reason here upon the stage of the world: to behold the creatures, *Rom. I.* that seeing in the creature, the *wisedome* of God, in ordering of things, the *goodnesse* of God in the vse of things, and the *power* of God in the greatnesse of things, the huge, vast heaven

heaven, and earth, hee might take occasion to glorifie, and magnifiethis God, to thinke highly of him, to exalt him in our thoughts, that his creatures heaven, and earth, be so beautifull, and excellent, what excellencie is in God himselfe?

And as the end of creation so in redemption, all is for his glory, and prayse, in *Ephesians* 1. how sweetly doth Saint Paul set forth the end of it. *To the glory of his rich mercie and grace* To bee mercifull to sinners to giue his owne sonne, for God to be come man, not for man in that estate as *Adam* was in innocency

It is the end of redemption. *Ephes. 1.*

innocencie but for sinners
for *God* to triumph ouer
sin, by his infinite mercy
here is the glory of his
grace shining in the Gos-
pell, all is for the glory,
and prayse of *God* there.

Psal. 50.
It is the
end of our
particular
deliveran-
ces.

And for particular de-
liverances in *Psal. 50.* *Call*
upon me in the day of trou-
ble: I will deliver thee,
and thou shalt glorifie me,
his deliverances of us in
the passages of our life is
that we may glorifie him,
by taking notice in immi-
nent dangers of some of
his attributes: when there
is no meanes of delive-
rance, of his power and
goodnes, &c. In *Revel. 4.*
The *Elders* are brought in
praying

Rev. 4.

praying God for the work of creation, and then in the fifth for *redemption*; *Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed vs,* so indeed the worke of creation, redemption, and the particular passages of *Gods* providence, and protection, and preservation, they are matter of *prayse* in heaven, and earth among *Gods* people.

Rev. 5.

Now to name a few *helpes*, and *meanes*, to performe this duty the better.

Helps and meanes to praise God.

If we would stirre up our selues to prayse *God* let us consider our owne unworthinesse? As in praying,

Consider our owne vnworthinesse.

er, there must be a humble heart, for a man will not seeke abroad, if hee haue somewhat at home, *poverty of spirit and humilitie of heart, makes a man pray*: so it is the humble soule that *praiseth God*, that sees no desert in it selfe, this is one way to help us to *praise God*, to see nothing in ourselues, why *God* should so regard us, as *to giue us our liues for a prey*, to set his loue on us, and to follow us with good, nay we haue deserved the contrary, that *God* should leave us, and expose us to misery, rather then to watch over us by his providence: what is in

in vs? *It's he that hath made us, and not wee our selves, & he made us again, when we were sinners when wee were worse then naught, therefore to humble us, we must consider our owne vnworthinesse, bee that knowes himselfe unworthy of any favour, bee will bee thankfull even for the least, as we see in Iacob, I am lesse then the least of all thy favours, therefore he was thankfull for the least: so wee see here in the text, these men are stirred vpto prayse God, they saw no other helpe, no wor- thinesse in themselues, they were at the gates of death, in a desperate estate,*
Oh

2.
Not to rest
on second
causes.

O that such men would praise God, indeed such men are fittest to praise God, that can ascribe help to nothing but to God, to no second causes.

Therefore in the next place (as a branch of the former) if we would praise God, dwell not on the second causes, if God use second causes in any favour he bestowes on vs, either in keeping us from any ill or bestowing any good consider it as a means that God might dispence with, that he might use if he would, or not use: See God in the second causes, rise from them to him: Art thou healed by Physick? Use Physicke as a meanes, but see God in it, but if

God

God hath cured thee without Physick, without ordinary meanes, then see him more immediatly doing good to thee without the helpe of *second causes*, that is one way to helpe us to prayse God to see him in every favour, and deliverance, for what could *second causes* doe, if hee should not giue a blessing? especially prayse him when he hath immediately done it, as he can, did not he make light before there was a sunne? he is not tyed to giue light by the sunne, and hee made waters before hee made the clouds; hee is not tied to the

the clouds, therefore especially *praise God*, when wee haue deliverance we know not how, without meanes, immediatly from the goodnes, and strength of *God*.

The necessity and use of the blessing.

Againe if wee would *praise God* for any favour, *consider the necessitie, and use of the favour wee pray for*, as these men here, they were at *Deaths doore*, and loathed all manner of *meate*, alas they had died if *God* had not helped them, If thou wouldest *blesse God*, consider what a miserable state thou shouldst be in, if thou hadst not that favour to *praise God* for: If thou be to *blesse*
God

God for thy senses, put
case thou shouldest want
thy sight, what a misera-
ble case thou shouldest be
in: so for any of the
senses that a man wants,
whereby hee should glo-
rifie God, and take the
comfort of the Creature,
put case a man should
want his tast, as these men
here, *their soule abhorred
all manner of meate*, alas
what a miserable case is it
to want a relish, and tast
of the comfort that God
hath put into the crea-
tures, put case we should
want the meanest benefite
wee enjoy, how uncom-
fortable would our lives
be?

This

This sparke of reason that *God* hath given us, that wee have understanding to conceive things, which is the engine whereby we doe all things as men, and are capable of the grace of *God*, what a miserable thing were it, if *God* should take away our wits, or suspend the use of them?

But especially in matters of grace, if *God* had not sent Christ to redeeme the world, what a cursed condition had we lyen in? next to Divels.

Againe if wee would praise *God*, let us every day keepe a *Diary* of his favours, and blessings; what good hee doth us privately,

4.
Dayly register Gods
favours.

ly, what positive blessings
he bestowes upon vs, and
what dangers hee frees us
from, and continues, and
renewes his mercies every
day, and publikly what
benefit wee have by the
state we live in, Oh what
a happie state is it that we
live in peace, that wee en-
joy such lawes, *that every
man may sit under his owne
vine, and under his owne
figtree* and enjoy the
comforts of this life,
when all the world about
us are, and have beene in
combustion! We should
keepe a *Register of Gods
blessings*, Oh, that wee
could learne to have such
exact lives! it would breed

G

a

a world of comfort, and wee should have a lesse account to make, when wee die.

Every day labour to be humbled for our sinnes specially such as break the peace of our consciences, and never give our bodies rest till our hearts have rest in the favour of *God*, and together with matter of humiliation dayly observe how *God* bestowes new favours, or else continues the old, that notwithstanding our provocation, and forgetfulness of him, hee strives with us by his goodness, this is a blessed duty that we should labour to performe. And

And then when we have done this let us *rouse up all that wee are, and all that wee have within us to praise God*, Psalme 103. *My soule praise the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy Name.* What have wee within us to praise God? Let us praise God with our *understanding*, to conceive, and have a right judgement of *Gods* favours, of the *worthing* of them, and our owne unworthinesse, and then a sanctified *Memory*, forget not all his *benefites*; forgetfulnesse is the *grave* of *Gods* blessings it buries all. And then there is in us the affection.

G 2

of

To prayse
God with
that which
is in us.

Psal, 103.

Our vnder-
standing.

Memory.

Sibbes, R.

Ioy.

of joy, and love to God to
tast him largely, and then
all within us will be large
in the praising of God. And
our tongue likewise though
that be not within us, it is
called our glory; let us make
it our glory in this, to
Trumpet out Gods praise
upon all occasions, all that
is within us, and all that
we are, or have, or can do,
let it be all to the glory,
and *praise of God*.

Tongue.

To draw to a conclu-
sion with some generall
application, of all that
hath beene spoken, and
then in particular to the
present occasion.

You know how God
hath dealt of late with
this

this *Citie*, and with our
selves indeed, for we are
all of one body politike,
and however *God* visited
them, yet it was our sinnes
also that provoked him,
we brought *stickes to the*
common fire. A Physitian
lets the arme blood, but
the whole body is distem-
pered, *God* let the *Citie*
blood, but the whole king-
dome was in a distemper,
so that it was for our sins
as well as theirs wee, all
brought (I say) some
thing to the common
flame, and *God* afflicted
us, even in them : *God* hath
now stayd the sicknesse
almost as Miraculously
as hee sent it : It was a

In the great
visitation.
1625.

Simile.

G 3 wonder

wonder that so many should be swept away in so short a time, it is almost as great a wonder that *God* should stay it so soone. And what may we impute it unto? Surely as it is in the text. *They cried unto the Lord, God* put it into the hearts of the Governours of the state to appoint humiliation and *crying to God*, and therefore since *God* hath beene so mercifull upon our humiliation it is religiously, and worthily done of the state that there should be a time to *blesse God*

Againe, *God* did it with a *word*, with a command,
it

it was both in the inflicting and delivery (as it were) without meanes: for what could the Physicians doe in staying the Plague? Alas all the skill in the world is at a losse in these kinds of sicknesses! it comes with *Gods* command, it is *Gods* arrow more especially then other sicknesses, *God* sent it by his Command, first to humble us for our sin, and now hee hath stayd it with a *word* of command that from above 5000. a weeke, it is come to three persons, *God* hath sent his *word* and healed us.

It was a pittifull state wee were in before: for

G 4 indeed

indeed it was not onely a sicknesse upon the *Citie* but a civill sicknesse: the whole state was distempered: for as there is sicknesse in the body when there is obstruction, when there is not a passage for the spirits and the blood from the liver, & from the heart, and from the head these obstructions cause weakenesse, and faintings, and consumption, So was there not an obstruction in the state of late? were not the veynes of the kingdome stopped? Was not civill commerce stayed? the affliction of this great *Citie*, it was as the affliction of the head
or

or of the heart or of the liver ; if the maine vitall part be sick, the whole is sicke, so the whole kingdome not only by way of sympathy, but it was civilly sicke in regard that all trading, and intercourse was stopped, it was a heavy visitation. And wee have much cause to blesse God that now the *wayes of this Sion* of ours *mourne not*, that there is free commerce, and intercourse as before, that we can meete thus peaceably, and quietly at *Gods* ordinances, and about our ordinarie callings, those that have an apprehension of the thing cannot chuse but breake

G 5

out

Concerning deliverance from the plague, to blesse God.

out in thanksgiving to God,
in divers respects.

1.
That hee
would cor-
rect.

1 Cor. II.
33.

First of all, have not we
matter to *praise God that he*
would correct us at all? hee
might have suffred us to
have gone on and beene
damned with the wicked
world as it is 1 Cor. II. 33.
We are therfore chastened of
the Lord that wee should not
be damned with the world:
it is his mercy that hee
would take us into his
hands as children, that he
would visite us at all.

2.
That hee
would do
it himselfe.

Another ground of
thanksgiving is this that
since he would correct us,
*he would use this kind of cor-
rection*, that he would take
us into his owne hands;
might

might he not have suffered a furious, bloody darke spirited, divellish spirited enemy to have invaded us, to have fallen into the hard hands of men acted with divellish malice? *David* thought this a favour, even that *God* would single him out to punish him with the *Plague* of pestilence that he might not fall before his enemies. The mercies of *God* are wondrous great when we fall into his hands hee is a mercifull *God*, hee hath tender bowels full of pittie and compassion: but The very mercies of wicked Idolaters are cruell, there was a mercie therefore in that, that *God* would take us
into

3.
That he
stayed the
Pestilence.

into his owne hands.

In the third place, we see when he had taken us into his own hands, how he hath *stopped the raging of the pestilence*, and hath inhibited the *destroying Angell*, even in a wondrous manner, that the *Plague* when it was so raging that it should come to decrease upon a sudden; *God* was wondrous in this worke, is not here matter of *praise*?

4
That our
lives were
spared.

Then againe, it is a mercy to us all here that *he should give us our lives for a prey* as *God* saith in *Jeremiah* to *Baruch*, *Wheresoever thou goest thou shalt have thy life for a prey*, might not *Gods arrow* have followed us where-

whereſoeuer wee went?

Whither can a man
goe *from this arrow*, but
that *God* being every
where might ſmite him
with the peſtilence? now
in that hee hath watched
over us, and kept us from
this noyſome contagious
ſicknes, and hath brought
us altogether here quiet-
ly and freely, that ſo there
may bee entercourſe be-
tweene man and man in
trading, and other cal-
lings, this is the fourth
ground of *praying of*
God.

And that *it did not*
rage in other parts : in
former time *God* ſcatter-
ed the peſtilence more
ouer

^s
That it
ſpread not
farre.

lower the kingdome : It is a great matter to blesse God for. I beseech you let us say with the same spirit, as this holy man here, *Oh that men therefore would prayse the Lord for his goodnes, and for the wonders that he doth for the children of men !* For his goodnesse, that hee would rather correct us here then damne us, for his goodnesse, that hee would not giue us up to our enemies, For his goodnesse, that he stayd the infection so suddenly, and that he stayd the spreading of it further, For his goodnesse vnto us in particular that hee hath kept us all safe. What

What shall wee doe,
now but consecrate, and
dedicate these liues of
ours for he giues us our
liues more then once, at
the beginning, there is
neuera one here but can
say by experience, *G O D*
hath given me my life,
at such a time, and such a
time, let us give these liues
again to *God*, labour to
reforme our former cour-
ses, and enter into a new
covenant with *God*, this
is one part of thanksgiving
to renew our covenant
with *God*, to please him
better, and indeed in every
thanksgiving, that should
bee one ingredient. Now
Lord

Lord I intend ; and resolve to please thee better, whatsoeuer my faults haue formerly beene, I resolve by thy grace, and assistance to breake them off, without this all the other is but a dead performance.

Now breifly by way of analogie, and proportion, to rayse some meditations from that that hath hath beene delivered concerning the body to the soule, for *God* is the Physitian both to soule, and body.

If *God* with his *word* can heale our bodies as the
Psalmist

Psalmist sayth here, much more can hee with his *word* heale our Soule.

There are many that their bodies are well (thanks be to *God*) but how is it with their soules? here you haue some symptomes to know their spirituall state and oh that people were apprehensiuē of it! haue you not many that their *soule loatheth all manner of meate*, and they *draw neere the gates of death*, their soules are in a desperate state, they are deeply sick, how shall wee know it? their soule *abhorreth all manner of wholesome meate*: how many are there that relish *Poets*, and history, any

God by
his Word
heales the
soule.

Symptome
of a sicke
soule.

any trifle that dorth but
feed their vaine fancie
and yet cannot relish the
blessed truth, and ordi-
nances of *God*? Where is
spirituall life, when this
spirituall sence is gone:
when men cannot relish
holy things? if they relish
the ordinance of *God*, it is
not the spirituall part of it,
so farre as the spirit tou-
cheth the conscience, but
something that (it may be)
is sutable to their conceit
expressions, or phrases or
the like, but it is a symptom
and signe of a fearefull
declining state, when men
do not relish the spiritu-
all ordinances of *God*,
which should be (as it
were)

were) *their appointed food*, when they doe not *delight to acquaint themselves with God* in hearing of the word, and reading, and the like, let such therefore, as delight not in spirituall things know that their soules lye gasping they are at the *gates of spirituall death*, all is not well there is some fearfull obstruction upon the soule, that takes away the appetite, the soule runnes into the world ouermuch, they cloy themselves with the world, when men canot relish heavenly things they are cate vp with the delight and joy of other things pleasures and profits.

Let

To recouer
spirituall
appetite.

Let them search the cause, and labour for purging sharpe things that may procure an appetite

Let them judge themselves, and see what is the matter that they doe not delight more in heavenly things; let them purge themselves by confession to *God*, and consideration of their sins, and labour to recover their appetite, for it is almost a desperate estate, *They are at the gates of death.*

Especially now when we come to the *communion*, what doe we heere if we cannot relish the food of our soules? let us examine if we desire to tast the

G
the
acq
if
doe
stem
D
God
giue
our
Spin
mak
relish
better
before
that
terin
thing
better
A
judge
when
the

the loue of *God*, and to be acquainted with *God* here if not, What shall wee doe in these spirituall distempers?

What to do
in spirituall
distempers.

Desire of *God*, cry to *God*, that he would forgiue our sinnes, and heale our soules by his holy Spirit, that hee would make us more spirituall to relish heavenly things, better then we haue done before, that as the things, that are heauenly, are better in their kind then other things are; so they may be better to our tast.

A man may know the judgement of his state, when hee answereth not the difference of things:
what

what the difference is between the food of life, and ordinary food, what the difference is between the comforts of the holy Ghost, and other comforts, between the riches, and pelfe of the world, and the riches of the spirit, the graces of *God* that will cause a man to liue, and die with comfort, the true riches that make the soule rich to eternity, there is no comparison: beg of *God*, this spirituall relish to discern *of things that differ*, that we may recouer our appetite *God* by his word, and spirit can doe it, not only the word written, but the inward spirituall word written

ten

ten in our hearts, desire
God to joyne his spirit
with his word, and sacra-
ments, and that will reco-
ver our tast and make us
spirituall that we shall re-
lish him that is both the
feast-maker, and the feast
it selfe, he is both the meat
and the provider of the
banquet.

For whence is it that all
other things are sweet to
vs? Deliverance from tro-
ble, and sicknesse? be-
cause it is a pledge of our
spirituall deliverance in
Christ, the deliverance
from hell and damnation,
what comfort can a man
have that knowes not his
state in grace, in the en-
joying

enjoying of his health,
when hee shall think he is
but as a *sheepe kept for
the slaughter* ? hee knows
not whether hee be
in the favour of *God* or
no?

Therefore let vs come,
and renew our faith in
the forgiuenesse of our
sinnes through the blood
of Christ, of whom we are
made partakers in the Sa-
crament. For if we beleiue
our deliverance from hell,
and damnation by the bo-
dy of Christ broken, and
his bloodshed, then every
thing will be sweet, when
we know *God* loues us to
life everlasting, then every
thing in the way to life e-
verlasting

uerlasting euen day
bread will be sweete, be-
cause the same loue that
giues heauen, giues day-
ly food, and the same loue
that redeemes us from hell
redeemes us from sicknes,
therefore let us labour to
strengthen our faith in the
maine, that wee may bee
thankfull for the lesse. And
as we enter into new coue-
nant with *God*; so labour to
keepe it: in *Levit. 26.* euery
thing auengeth the brea-
king of *Gods* couenant
when we make couenant
to serue him better for the
time to come, and yet
breake it, *God* is forced to
send his messenger he sends
sicknesse to *avenge his Co.*

Levit. 26.

H *venant*

enant, considering that he
hath lately so auenged it,
let it make us so much the
more circumspect in our
carriage. So much
for this time,
and text.

*
* *

FINIS.



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Thomas Wykes.

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1638.

